

# The Nation

VOL. VII., No. 8.]  
Registered as a Newspaper.

SATURDAY, MAY 21, 1910.

[PRICE 6D.  
Postage: U.K., 4d. Abroad, 1d.

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## Diary of the Week.

THE first stage of the funeral ceremonies of the late King was accomplished on Tuesday, when his body was borne on a gun carriage from the Throne Room at Buckingham Palace to Westminster Hall, where it lay in State till Friday, watched by Gentlemen-at-Arms, Yeomen of the Guard, and Grenadier Guards, standing with bowed heads and reversed arms. The street procession was of great beauty and also of great simplicity. King George followed the coffin on foot, in the uniform of an Admiral, accompanied by two of his boys. The figure in which the crowd took the closest interest was, naturally, that of Queen Alexandra, and the King's devotion to his mother during the service in Westminster Hall was the feature which most touched the onlookers.

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THE gathering in the great Hall consisted of the Royal Family and their kingly and princely visitors, Lords and Commons, the great officers of the State and Court, religious, military, naval, and civil, and other representative men and women. The service was brief and but little adorned, beginning with the Lord's Prayer, and ending with Watts's almost national hymn. In the afternoon of Tuesday the admission of people to view the lying-in-State began, the waiting queue in the streets being fully a mile and a-half long. All observers spoke of the quiet but genuinely affectionate spirit of the crowd, though the discomfort must have been great and the long waiting a serious physical ordeal.

But the most remarkable scenes occurred on the second day of the lying-in-State. The queue, which the police formed and kept, stretched at one time from Westminster Hall to Chelsea, and its actual length was about four miles. The night was wet and cheerless, yet about fifty people kept an unbroken vigil before the gates. At two o'clock, according to the "Daily News," there were 500 waiting figures, and at four their line extended to the Victoria Tower, many of them blue with cold. Some had waited for six hours, advancing inch by inch, and worn with weariness. Most of the reporters remarked the silence of the people, and the absence of jesting, an almost inevitable note of a London crowd. Parisians would have been a thought more cheerful, though not less kind. We recall the saying of a market-woman, who stood by us before the Arc de Triomphe, under which Victor Hugo's body lay: "C'est une fête, monsieur, mais un peu triste."

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No national function seems complete without a pæan or a dirge from Lord Rosebery, and what he said on Wednesday at the Royal Scottish Hospital on King Edward's personality was very well said. He praised the King's contribution to peace in South Africa, after the distractions of the war, and his genius for making friends, not only among foreign rulers but foreign peoples. The King's popularity was, he said, largely due to the fact that he was "so essentially human." "When it behoved him to be a King, he was a King, but all the time he was a man with a man's heart, a man's nature, and a man's compassion for those who were less well placed than himself." Of the new King he said:—

"He has led a pure, healthy, and abstemious life; he is a good husband and a good father. He will exhibit on the Throne domestic virtues which are dear to this country. He has explored every region of the Empire over which he is called to rule more than any other Sovereign in the long line of his predecessors. He knows what he has to govern, and at home he has spared no pains to make himself acquainted with every phase of our political life. Only a few days ago Lord Balfour, Lord Kinnaird, and I saw him sitting in his place in the House of Lords, as he was always sitting, as a peer among his peers, listening patiently and vigilantly to the debates in that House. Into the Gallery of the House of Commons he has also gone whenever any interesting debate has been taking place, in the attempt to study in the popular Chamber all the varying politics of the day. He has spared no pains to fit himself for the Throne, and if an honest and earnest endeavor to do his duty be any guarantee of success, that I am sure we have in our new King."

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A WELL-INFORMED correspondent writes: "There has naturally been some criticism of the departure from precedent involved in King Edward's interviews with foreign Sovereigns and diplomatists unaccompanied by the Secretary of State. Mr. Balfour has put the constitutional position admirably, and very little more need be said about it. But it should be understood that if there was blame at all, it rested, not on the King's shoulders, but on the Foreign Secretary's. We may be quite sure that the King would have been delighted to have Sir

Edward Grey with him. But the Foreign Secretary, with his admirable qualities, has a keen aversion from that side of the diplomatic business which consists in such semi-ambassadorial functions as King Edward discharged with his instinctive tact and skill. He has gifts that more than compensate for this gap in his character, and Liberals, I imagine, will like him the better for it. But it revealed the real cause of the lapse from precedent."

WE strongly hope that the Palace authorities will, at some early date, think it wise to relax the present regulation as to the limit of public mourning. It is clear from the protests that have appeared in the Press that the wearing of mourning up to the end of July will ruin the trade in colored materials, which, of course, had been heavily stocked when the death of King Edward was announced. By the end of July the London season is dead, beyond all chance of revival, and even an English summer is more than half spent. Royalty does not want to have any further evidence of the genuineness and warmth of public feeling about King Edward, and, if it did not exist, a prolonged period of formal mourning would not create it. The Royal house under King Edward labored to make life easier for a commercial community, not to add to its burdens, and we are sure the new King is concerned, we may say chiefly concerned, to follow in this respect and in other ways in his father's footsteps. The matter is a small one for the Court; it is a large one for thousands of the people.

THE petition against the return of Captain Guest for East Dorset has been successful, and he has been unseated, on the ground that the whole expenditure on the election had not been included in the returns. The graver charges were dismissed by both Judges, as were the charges of personal bribery and corrupt practice against Lady Wimborne and Captain Guest. These included the direct bribery of electors by Captain Guest and his agents, the indirect bribery of a number of allotment holders, who were allowed (when Captain Guest's candidature had been set up) to retain their holdings for seven years after having received notice to quit them, the dismissal of an old laborer from his work on the Canford estate on the ground that he was a Conservative, a corrupt subscription to a slate club, and the intimidation of electors by the presence of the Canford Manor agent, notebook in hand, at the polling booth, at which 100 tenants voted. On the other hand, the Judges decided that hired motor cars had been employed at the election, and that their use, without payment through the election agent, was an illegal practice. They also found that the cost of a pamphlet defending the Wimborne family from charges of oppressing their workers at Dowlais, and of much other matter supporting Captain Guest's candidature, was illegally omitted from the agent's schedule of expenses. These offences made the election void.

THE Judges passed a good many comments on the general conduct of the contest. Mr. Justice Pickford thought that all candidates' subscriptions to local objects should be made illegal. Both Judges concurred in condemning the action of the Canford Manor estate agent in standing before the booth on polling day, notebook in hand. Mr. Justice Lawrance, while allowing a proper electoral influence to "wealth and position," thought this conduct, though it had no direct intimidating effect, "as bad as could possibly be." Mr. Justice Pickford

also held that, apart from general nursing of the constituency, the cost of action directly favoring a candidate's return, even if it took place before the issue of the writ, must be counted as expenditure on the election. On the whole the Judges' view, far more severe than that applied to the Yarmouth case, should make for purer and freer elections.

LORD GLADSTONE, who was cordially received by all parties in Cape Town on Tuesday, finds a political problem of some difficulty awaiting him. This is the choice of the first Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa. It lies between Mr. Merriman and General Botha. On the ground of political accomplishment there can be no comparison between the two men. Mr. Merriman is a brilliant orator, with a long administrative career behind him, and is a figure comparable in charm and distinction with any contemporary in the Imperial service. General Botha's career we all know. He has been an extraordinary success as Prime Minister of the Transvaal, a success due to an instinctive statesmanship and moderation, combined with a winning friendliness, in which he somewhat resembles King Edward. The result is that the late Captain-General of the Boer armies is the English, as well as the Dutch, candidate for the Premiership of South Africa. Even the English party at the Cape seems willing to let the prize go from the old capital, the centre of South African civilisation. Such are the fruits of self-government!

THE full returns of the Spanish general election are now known. The result is disappointingly conventional. The Liberals, who made the elections, have assigned themselves 226 seats, allowing 108 to the Conservatives. In the larger towns, however, and notably in Madrid and Barcelona, the elections seem to have been free, and there the results are interesting. The Republicans, who made common cause with the Socialists, have increased their representation from 28 to 40. They were much encouraged by the return from exile of their banished leader, Señor Lerroux. For the first time a single Socialist has been returned, the able leader of the party, Pablo Iglesias. The future cannot be safely predicted, for the new Liberal Premier, Señor Cañalejas, finds himself at the head of a by no means homogenous majority. A young man, with a rather violent anti-clerical record and Socialist leanings, he seems to have entered a path of moderation and compromise. He is said to have contracted close personal ties in Clerical circles, and is expected to attempt to solve the Clerical question by negotiations with the Vatican. It has yet to be seen whether the Vatican will lend itself to such a programme.

THE scenes enacted by the Cretan Assembly have served to revive the island question once more, and in a somewhat acute form. The Assembly, it will be remembered, began its sittings by taking an oath of allegiance to King George, and, when the Moslem deputies protested, some Christian hot-heads tore their protest up. Worse was the subsequent action of the Assembly, which has now excluded the Moslem minority, on the ground that it refuses to take the illegal oath to King George. The protests of the Porte have brought down verbal remonstrances from the Powers on the head of the Cretan Assembly, but as yet the wrong has not been repaired. Intolerance of this type makes it difficult for the real friends of Greece and the Cretans to press for Union with any hope of being listened to. Meanwhile, an active agitation is going on all over Turkey. One reads of meetings at

Salonica and far away in Asia Minor, at Korvia. The Albanians are also being urged to lay down their arms, in order to take them up again against the Greeks. It may suit the military party among the Young Turks to ferment such a movement as this, but it cannot suit any section of the Greek race to provoke it.

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THE civil war in Albania has passed beyond the sensational phase of pitched battles. It is even possible that the phase of disorganisation and discouragement which so rapidly overtakes all Albanian movements has already been reached. Albanians do not fight with the dour steadiness of Bulgarian rebels (though they are naturally the more warlike race), partly because they lack the organised national ideal, partly because they have no talent for system, and chiefly, perhaps, because defeat is always made tolerable for them. But from the latter tradition the Turks are now sharply departing. Round their columns, as they advance into the mountains, the rebel villages are smoking, and the pickets are carrying out a systematic disarmament. For this village-burning the Turks give as their excuse that they are following the precedent which we set in the Boer war. They forget that theirs is not a military, but a punitive measure, and it will not be followed by the payment of compensation. They are meanwhile gathering fresh reinforcements at heavy expense, and clearly intend to subdue the mountains once for all. That task in a purely military sense is probably not beyond their means, but it will be a futile conquest unless their political wisdom equals their military efficiency.

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PERSIA is not to be lightly forgiven for rejecting an Anglo-Russian loan at 7 per cent. on terms that would have destroyed her independence. On the one hand, it is said, on good authority, that Germany has been officially warned off the course. On the other hand, the "Times" has opened a campaign against the Persians, because, amid the struggle to evict the Shah and defeat Russian intrigue, they have, for want of money, allowed a certain degree of anarchy to grow up in Southern Persia, to the detriment of British trade. The "Times" is particularly sore because a duty of 100 per cent. is levied on British tea. It forgets that this tariff was forced on the Persians by Russia in the days before the alliance. "However warm," it writes, "may be our sympathies with the constitutional system, we cannot be expected to look on indefinitely while our fellow-subjects are being robbed and ruined," and it goes on to warn the Persians that "our patience has its limits." We hope the Persians duly appreciate the warmth of these constitutional sympathies. Some of them might, perhaps, be spared for Finland, where, also, a tariff, imposed by Russia, will soon be "robbing and ruining" British traders.

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THE Grand Master of the Order of Oddfellows made a strong protest against the growth of pleasure-seeking among the youth of the country in his annual address on Tuesday last. He complained that it was difficult to increase membership among young men owing to the constantly growing pursuit of amusement which was "running away with the tissue and substance of the nation." Ninety-five per cent. of this pleasure fund came out of the wages of the industrial classes, and all kinds of serious social agencies helped to swell it. He spoke favorably of Labor Exchanges and of the proposed

scheme of State insurance, which, he thought, would not injure the Order in standing or power. A similar line of friendliness was taken at the Conference of the Hearts of Oak Society, and by the Ancient Shepherds, who, however, asked for early details of Mr. Lloyd George's plans. The Grand Master of the Manchester Unity adopted, in the main, the same attitude, saying that it was impossible to meet the question of compulsory State insurance with a simple negative. He thought that the Old Age Pension Act should be extended, so that friendly society benefits should not count as income against a pension claim.

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THE catastrophe in the Wellington pit at Whitehaven has had a tragic ending. The workings were sealed up in order to stay the ravages of the fire, and prevent the entire destruction of the pit. However, a large party of colliers made a nobly passionate protest against the tacit acknowledgment that hope for their fellows had been abandoned. One of their number proposed a gallant scheme of rescue, involving, as it appeared, frightful risk to those who ventured on it. After consultation, the Home Secretary approved the official decision, and telegraphed that any attempt to penetrate the workings must fail, and would mean certain death to the rescuers. He could not, therefore, sanction further loss of life. Under the Compensation Act, the Whitehaven Colliery Company will probably be called upon to pay up to £35,000 to the dependents of the dead men, in addition to £5,000, for which they are insured. Thus the work of social justice goes on.

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No reliance is to be placed on the hope that the Opposition in the Duma will succeed in modifying the Bill for the suppression of Finnish autonomy. It has, indeed, emerged from the Committee stage in a rather worse form than its original shape. Only four members are to be allowed to Finland in the Duma. The subjects on which the Duma is to legislate for Finland include Imperial taxation, the rights of Russian subjects—i.e., officials—in Finland, criminal law and procedure, education, the rights of meeting, association, the Press and the importation of literature, the tariff, communications, navigation, and currency. Lest anything at all should be left, by an oversight, to the Finnish Diet, there is even a clause about "general legislation." Meanwhile, Finns and Swedes alike are pledging themselves to passive resistance. Patriotic officials will resign. Popular leaders will be deported. Already a movement for emigration to the States has begun. It will be the Bobrikoff régime over again. The protests from England, Belgium, and Germany have been received with the anger which we should expect by the Black Hundreds and the "Novoe Vremya."

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THE tail of Halley's comet has come and gone through the earth's atmosphere, and, in spite of its fourteen millions of miles, has left us pretty well as we were. A "comet panic," however, was set up in Southern Italy, where the population uttered prayers for deliverance, and, more conspicuously, among the negro, Spanish, Slav, and Italian laborers in the United States. Pennsylvanian miners refused to work the pits, preferring, as their spokesmen said, "to be above ground when the final bust-up came." Negroes in Georgia and elsewhere held prayer-meetings or hid in cellars, and insurance agents seem to have reaped a rich harvest from a safe gamble with death. Crime among the negroes almost ceased while this fear lasted.



## Politics and Affairs.

### PERSONALITY IN RULERSHIP.

MODERN theorists have been wont to pour scorn upon the interpretation of history as the biography of great men. They insist, instead, on an ordered process of events, the issue of impersonal forces under the guidance of social evolution. But the ordinary citizen is under no such illusion. He is well aware how lame and impotent are all explanations of the play of forces or tendencies divorced from the character and career of strong personalities. Nor—as this week's experiences have proved—have the "levelling" influences of democracy done much, or anything, to diminish the passionate interest in the "great ones of the earth." It is not merely that the majesty of law or government seems incapable of effective realisation apart from the illuminating presence of some high being who is its visible emblem and embodiment. There is a far stronger and more impassioned attachment to the person of the monarch or ruler than to the State for which he is supposed to stand. Indeed, the modern movement makes it very difficult to foretell the rôle which eminent personality is likely to occupy, even in those States which are in the full tide of democratic tendencies. But it is evident that publicity endows the virtues and the powers of those who occupy high places, whether by hereditary tenure or election, with singular efficacy. Perils and temptations attend the limelight which the modern Press throws on the lives of rulers: there is the danger of a lackey's hero-worship which hides the true qualities of fineness in character and works under a garish show of external pride. But, in the main, this wide, loose, promiscuous publicity tends to rightness of popular judgment.

So far as the personal power of the modern head of a great State is concerned, there is a double and contrary movement. In those old-established States where hereditary chieftainship survives, there is a slow orderly progress to a new personal status for the monarch. His person seems to gather an even larger and more real hold upon the private affections of his subjects than seemed compatible with the aloofness and absoluteness of the earlier conception of kingship. In illustration of our meaning, it is needless to look further than the striking testimony afforded by the present sorrow of the nation, in which the formal, or ceremonial, feeling is far outweighed by a more intimate sense of personal bereavement—the grief felt for a beloved relative rather than for a great public loss. Nothing has been more remarkable through the processional scenes of this week than the unforced, affectionate interest of the masses of the people. This interest was more developed, more delicate, than that displayed during the funeral of Queen Victoria. In the course of her long reign, Queen Victoria had become rather a traditional than a personal figure in the eye of the nation. A certain aspect of motherhood adhered to her, but she was not attached to the commonalty, nor did she partake of its daily life, in the sense in which King Edward belonged to it. From him radiated

something warm, intimate, and friendly, which came down to the people, magnified, no doubt, and coarsened by the almost unmeaning eulogies of the Press. The people thought of him for what in sober truth he was—a man of truly remarkable gift for giving pleasure to others. He was the ideal master, host, companion, the model of what every man in power should wish to be in his relations to those who served him and whom he served. Those who have seen King Edward walk through a great company of guests, and salute each one of them, leaving him charmed, gratified, lightened of his little load of egoistic but very human passion for notice and praise, can realise how well earned was the general tribute to his power to charm. He was the average man raised to a high degree, rich in saving common-sense, and able, by virtue of his position, to make this quality go far. But this is not the whole secret of King Edward's attraction. What he did he did with the utmost zest. He had no touch of the *faux bonhomme*. He lived in the rapid outer movement of modern life, genuinely and immensely interested in it. He belonged to a pleasure-loving age, and history will probably say that the fault of his Court was its excessive gaiety, its light-hearted association with the comedy theatre, the turf, the distracting busy-ness of a London season. But even that fault was an endearing one; it gave a flavor of democracy to the social show, for the mass of men knew that the King loved the sight of the crowd at Epsom as much as it liked to see him. As a matter of fact, this popular conception of Kingship is not peculiar to this country, though the King's personality has so greatly forwarded it. Even in nations not so far advanced towards constitutional monarchy and popular self-government, such as Germany or Italy, we discern something of the same tendency to seek a new personal status for monarchy in the willing, and even affectionate, regards of the people.

Still more striking is the approach towards a new place for personality in rulership visible in nations which, like France and the United States, have formally adopted an impersonal form of government. In the latter country, especially, the notion that the Constitution, as a repository of abstract principles of justice and reason, is an all-sufficient ruler, has been profoundly modified by the course of events. In every emergency some great personality has assumed control, as interpreter, administrator, savior of the State, with the passionate assent of a nation of sovereign citizens. Indeed, there is something almost pathetic in the eagerness with which America hastens to throw aside the doctrine of equality, and to thrust power and responsibility into the hands of the strongest man whom the emergency throws up. It almost seems as if, even after long generations of Republicanism, under the conditions of a new world, remote from the traditions of an "effete European civilisation," some curious instinct of monarchy survived and sought utterance in the right to endow some favored citizen with the attributes and prerogatives of royalty. The case of a Civil War, in which even the extremity of a dictatorship is quite intelligible, is perhaps not relevant testimony.



But we need not go back a generation to illustrate our meaning. The States are not now under any critical pressure. Yet we have seen Mr. Roosevelt achieve a position which may almost be described as one of quasi-royalty. Not a man of first-rate eminence in any of the many departments of activity in which he has engaged—soldier, statesman, orator, historian, preacher, sportsman—and not a thinker at all, it is difficult to explain upon any “rational” grounds the place he seems to be acquiring in the hearts and expectations of his countrymen. Even in Europe the semi-regal procession which he—a private American citizen—is enjoying is without a parallel. No man without a badge of high office has ever passed a month of such ceremonial elevation as that accorded to this happy family. It is easy to explain, to quote the immense and multifarious vitality of the man, his incomparable self-confidence, his ever-pushing will, and to regard him, as superstitious people tend to do, as “a man of destiny.” But it is more difficult to account for the status which he appears to have attained, during an absence of a year, in his own country. Absence seems to have ripened a fame already grown very large. Though grave issues are rising in the public life of America, it does not seem obvious that the gravity is so immediate and so overwhelming as to require a reversal of all the past traditions, such as is involved in the demand that Mr. Roosevelt should thrice enter the Presidential field. Nor, indeed, does a fair view of his statecraft indicate him as an instrument of Providence for the solution of the political and industrial problems which loom big on the American horizon.

The only rational interpretation is the craving for some stronger, more vivid, and perhaps more enduring, element of personality in rulership than is furnished by the usual traditions of Republican democracy. We are not here concerned with the dangers attendant on such a course in a country where the Constitution assigns more real and direct political power to the President than in this country is wielded by a constitutional Monarch. But it is an interesting and a significant thing that this popular feeling for personal rulership should survive so powerfully in a great heterogeneous community of “free and equal citizens” equipped with a complete machinery of popular government.

#### THE RE-CASTING OF THE ROYAL DECLARATION.

THE Government have, we are sure, acted rightly in announcing their intention to amend the Royal Declaration on Catholic doctrine, so as to remove from it its offence to the religious feelings of the Roman Catholic community. Such action seems to us at once Christian and politic. It is no part of the modern State, which is always feeling its way to an attitude of neutrality to the creeds which it tolerates, to stigmatise one such faith as foolish or depraved, and to link that abusive description with the act of succession to the Throne. In particular it is not the business of an Empire governed and constituted as is our own. The body of opinion hostile to the Declaration in its

present form is sufficiently weighty. Canada, whose population is nearly divided between Catholics and Protestants, has petitioned against it by an overwhelming vote of the Dominion Parliament. Australia has moved in the same direction. Ireland's wishes we know, and those of Catholic England. One section at least of the Anglican Church approaches so near to the Roman doctrine of the Mass as, at all events, to resent a statement by the King that it is “superstitious and idolatrous.” But, in fact, a nation which has advanced so far on the path of tolerance as to remove nearly all civil disabilities from Catholic subjects, and even to open up a policy of endowment for Catholic colleges and schools, has no further use for such obsolete formulæ as the Declaration. Liverpool and Belfast alone echo its crude language and clumsy attempt to compass a political end by criticism of doctrine. To the Orangeman the voice of Bishop Burnet and the early Whig statesmen is still a sacred organ. Elsewhere the declaration presents itself as a survival of a past phase of English history. The Protestant succession is guaranteed, not only by the Act of Settlement, but by the will of Parliament, by the century-long traditions of the House of Brunswick, by the overwhelming balance of religious opinion in this country, and by its inevitable movement all the world over. That cause is finished; and in modifying the language of the Declaration we are concerned only with the modern sentiment of toleration, and with the amenities of our public and national life.

At the same time certain difficulties present themselves when we come to the actual terms of modification, of which the Government will do well to take heed. The Royal Declaration is linked with three great instruments which guaranteed the liberties of the realm and established the present constitutional monarchy—the Declaration of Rights, the Bill of Rights, and the Act of Settlement. That Act prescribes the taking of the Declaration either at the Coronation or at the first meeting of the Sovereign with his new Parliament, and prescribes it as a condition of his lawful succession to the Throne. Therefore, if the Declaration were modified, it would seem at first sight as if the Act of Settlement had been nullified. Moreover, under the new conditions set up by the Act of 1867, the demise of the Crown no longer automatically dissolves the existing Parliament, and calls upon the Sovereign to make his profession of faith before a new one. During the interval that must elapse between the accession and the Coronation or the assembling of Parliament, the question naturally arises whether the King is King *de jure* as well as *de facto*. In other words, can he lawfully yield his assent to a change in the wording of the Royal Declaration if his own assumption of Sovereignty is still incomplete? On this point, we can hardly think that any reasonable doubt is possible. Bounds cannot be set to the sovereignty of Parliament. Bills will necessarily secure the Royal assent before the Coronation or the King's appearance in State in the House of Lords. It can hardly be contended that one such act is inferior in power to another. Parliament is able to modify the Declaration or the Act of Settlement, or both, as well

as it can pass a Regency Bill or a One Man One Vote Bill, and who is to call its authority in question?

At the same time, it does seem to us a matter of importance to achieve the necessary change with a minimum of friction and of offence even to the over-sensitive Protestant feeling of a section of the people. For that reason we hope that the Government will be able to avoid a change in the Act of Settlement itself, and will confine themselves to re-casting the Declaration, so as, if possible, to turn that statement into a simple affirmation of Protestant or Reformed Church doctrine. That Act was the charter of the present Royal House, as well as an entrenchment thrown up against a return to the despotism of the Stuarts. It should not be lightly tampered with, and even a verbal change might provoke a controversy perturbing to serious men. What, therefore, should be the aim of the Government? Clearly to see to it that a change in the language of the Declaration should be accomplished by the general assent of the various parties in the State. This should be easy, now that every vestige of the dynastic and party controversies of William and Anne and the early Georges has disappeared. None the less, such assent should be obtained before any step be taken involving a modification even of the verbal accessories of Kingship. The change, if it is made, should clearly be so much the act of the nation as to be kept clean out of platform controversy of the partisan type, and presented simply as an act of grace to the adherents of a faith which has no career, or chance of a career, in British sovereignty, and only claims, as the reward of its civic allegiance, the average courtesies and charities of modern public life.

#### THE EDWARDIAN EPOCH.

ALL too short as it was, the reign of King Edward VII. left its mark upon our history, and, in process of time, no doubt we shall speak of the "Edwardian" period as we have long since spoken of the Victorian. Indeed, the long reign of the Queen has forced subdivisions upon current speech, and we distinguish fairly marked tendencies by the names of the Early, Middle, and Late Victorian. When men tried to sum up the characteristics of the Victorian age, they found at hand an overwhelming mass of material which made it sufficiently difficult to measure the results achieved in any single department of public activity. The reign had witnessed nearly the whole development of electric communication and steam locomotion by land and sea, together with the consequent social, economic, and political changes. It had found the working classes, at the Queen's accession, at the nadir of their fortunes. The Industrial Revolution had done its worst. The enclosures were complete, the Corn Laws were in full operation. At the same time, the Reform movement had begun, and the first decade of the reign witnessed the first important efforts of statesmen to grapple with the new situation. On all sides the observer, looking back over the 63 years, was able to record substantial, if not always satisfactory, progress. The least satisfactory feature, in point of fact, to men

of popular sympathies, as they pondered over the many retrospects penned in January, 1901, was that the pulse of progress appeared to be arrested. It was difficult, even for the pessimist, to deny that substantial advances had been made. It was possible to maintain that the beginning of the reign had coincided with a time of very great social depression, but it was hardly possible to deny that the efforts of reformers had had a real effect in mitigating the evils of those earlier days.

But the outlook for the future was not so bright. Not only were we in the middle of a desolating war, but to those who contemplated the general movement of political forces in the last fifteen years of the reign there was much to suggest that the wave of advance had spent itself. Democratic enthusiasm had died down. Liberalism was apparently at its lowest ebb, and Socialism was not as yet a force to be reckoned with. Since the extension of the suffrage the Conservative Party had enjoyed a nearly unbroken supremacy. The khaki election had just been fought and won, and it looked as though there was a real want of some quality, whether of grit or of intelligence, in the mass of the people, which led them to acquiesce passively in the not very desirable state of life to which the movement of things had brought them. Neither at home nor abroad could the democratic movement be said to have brought forth fruits to justify the hopes of those who had labored at the tillage and the sowing.

In this respect, the nine years that have passed have brought a notable change. The reactionary tendencies, obvious even to the superficial observer at the opening of the century, have, indeed, gone forward to their pre-destined end. Conservatism has developed into a definite creed, which—without intending a question-begging epithet—we may be allowed to call reactionary in that it seeks to revive the ideals of an earlier age. It is at once Imperialist, Protectionist, and Militarist. Its spirit is, indeed, gravely chastened and changed. It is not the buoyant, aggressive militarism of the Kipling period. It is a depressed, defensive, and, at times, alarmist militarism. It rests on the belief in national decadence, on a sad-eyed vision of departing greatness.

On the other side of the picture we can see in the ten years a rally of all the democratic forces, recalling the best days of 1868, and, notwithstanding all obstacles, out-doing that period in positive achievement. We see the definite entry of organized labor into the field of politics, and the suffusion of the older Liberalism with a far more definite perception of the requirements of social reform. A conception of the functions of government and the relations between the individual and the State, which till 1906 had been matter for academic discussion, has since that year been translated into practical legislation in more than one direction. Provision for the feeding of necessitous school children became law almost without opposition. All parties vie with one another in claiming credit for the Old Age Pensions Act. The Wages Board Bill was practically uncontested, though it initiated a wide departure in principle from the old idea of non-intervention in industrial matters. We

might prolong the list indefinitely, but we will add only the land taxes in the Budget, which, small and perhaps insignificant in themselves, pointed to new and sufficiently Radical doctrines of land tenure.

We shall not, therefore, deceive ourselves with vain hopes if we maintain that the late reign, short as it has unfortunately been, has yet lasted long enough to witness, not merely a full revival of the old democratic forces, but new accretions which have given them a fresh vitality and have inspired a larger hope. There are lions enough in the path, the constitutional difficulty hangs over us unsolved, and the internal development of every nation is at any time liable to obstruction through international complications. We must expect our share of defeats and disappointments in the new reign, as in the old. But the fortunes of social progress are not entirely bound up with politics or with party. The new hope of eliminating the root causes of that most widely diffused form of suffering which springs from excessive poverty is not, we are glad to think, cherished by Liberals or Labor representatives alone. We depart radically from the remedies propounded by Tariff Reformers, but we are not blind to the fact that a new, real desire to mitigate some of the worst of industrial evils forms a great part of the inspiration of their movement.

If the prospects of social reform have thus brightened in the decade, it is only fair to add that the older principles of Liberalism have equally come by their own. Imperialism had plunged South Africa into the condition in which King Edward found it on his accession. The free gift of self-government has given it the chance to develop into a second Canada. We have still to apply the lesson in other parts of the world. But the intervening years have witnessed the steady, undiminished pressure of the Irish demand. They have seen the first movements towards political freedom in India; they have been marked by the new insistence on the demand for the political equality of the sexes which, for the first time, has become one of the recognised fighting forces in the political world. In these matters the politician is hard to convince. As men are readier to be generous than to be just, so they are more willing to make material concessions that cost them something, than to admit an equality of rights which generally ends by adding to their own comfort and security. But in each case the struggle will go forward as long as the progressive impulse lasts.

#### GOVERNMENT BY MATHEMATICS.

THE Royal Commission on Electoral Systems has certainly done good work. It has produced a report which is one of the ablest and most impartial pieces of reasoning that we remember of its kind, and by so doing has advanced the argument on proportional representation. In the second place, it has practically decided for us that, if in the near future we do adopt a method of obviating the evils of split votes and triangular contests, it will be by the simple expedient of the alternative vote, and not by the clumsy and expensive device of the Second Ballot.

For the rest, we incline to think that the immediate urgency of proportional representation as the means of securing a miniature map of the mind of the electorate may easily be, at this juncture, exaggerated. If it is the fair representation of all sections of opinion that democrats postulate as their end, it is more important in the first place to remember that half our adult population is totally unrepresented at present, by reason solely of its sex. A reform which would diminish the power of money, by lowering the cost of elections and the expenses of a political career, would do more to give electors a wider choice of candidates than any change in the method of counting votes. If it is distorted majorities that vex us, the first enemy is the plural voter. And, finally, if we aim at a more conscious and scientific organisation of public opinion, we must secure the predominance of the elected Chamber. Yet, when all these prior claims are weighed, a wise mind may argue, and a cautious mind predict, that we shall not come to the end of our controversy between the claims of Two Houses and the claims of One, until we have faced the fact that a popular Chamber, chosen on an inexact basis, cannot yield a perfectly fair and stable reflex of the people's mind.

This report marks, however, a great advance, because, for the first time in the course of a controversy which has lasted now for half a century, it clears away the purely sceptical or philistine opposition to proportional representation. Be it good or bad, the thing is not a mere academic fad. The one obstacle on which the Commission has dwelt seems, to our thinking, relatively unimportant. It does not lend itself to by-elections. But their value as an index of opinion is doubtful. Governments reckon too certainly on these misfortunes to be greatly moved by them, and experience shows that a seat won at a by-election is nearly always lost if a General Election follows close on its heels. A substitute for a member who dies or resigns might be found, if the electors who filled his nomination papers were authorised to choose his successor. There are, however, two grave objections to the working of a proportional system, which cannot be too carefully considered. The adoption of large constituencies electing from three to ten members would immediately enhance the cost of electioneering, if the present methods were retained; only a rich and powerful party could face this consequence with equanimity. In the second place, while it is certainly true that the power of mere party organisation would be shaken in the House, the success of any party in the country would depend to an even greater degree than at present on its efficient, and even tyrannical, discipline at the polls. Proportional representation would, no doubt, protect us against extreme and exaggerated fluctuations of opinion, and would make the individual member responsible to his constituents as he is only in name to-day. But its two dangers—the aggravation of the money power and the growth of "bossism" in the constituencies—are possibilities to be seriously weighed.

The real debate turns, however, on an issue more fundamental still. The intelligent advocate of things as they are will frankly admit that the House of Commons is only approximately representative. He can, indeed,



do no less in face of the authoritative figures which the Commission sets forth. We have only once in recent history had an election which really gave a fair reflection of public opinion. Here in parallel columns are the amazing results of a careful calculation:—

ELECTION.	1885	1886	1892	1895	1900	1906	1910
Actual Majority ...	L. 158	C. 104	L. 44	C. 150	C. 134	L. 356	L. 124
Proportional Majority ...	L. 92	L. 18	L. 40	C. 2	C. 2	L. 114	L. 54

Never in this generation ought the Conservatives to have had full control of the House of Commons! Once a minority of electors returned a majority of the House. Thrice a Liberal and twice a Conservative majority was exaggerated. Only once (in 1892) did the House quite represent the country. What would have been the actual course of history had proportional representation prevailed through this period, it would be futile to speculate. Certainly there could have been no extremes of reaction, and as surely there could have been no bold or sudden democratic advance. There could have been no South African War, and the Balfourian Education Act and Licensing Act would have been very different measures. Some splitting and hiving of groups there must have been. Liberal Unionists and Whigs might have formed a centre party which would have held the balance of power. During those eleven years when Conservatism ruled with what ought to have been a majority of two, either a Whig secession would have made possible a moderate Unionist administration, or a Liberal Unionist or Tory Democrat secession would have put into office a moderate Liberal Government. Each school will adapt these figures to its own arguments. "Into what violences," say the proportionalists, "have we been hurried by a vicious system! Each party in turn has ruled by a false mandate, and each has failed to interpret the real will of the people. We have known no steady advance. We have only leaped alternately in opposite directions. Certainly we should have had no swift and radical legislation. But equally we should have had no ebb tide after the flood, and in the end, after a whole generation, we might have advanced further than we have to-day." "From what weakness, and impotence and irresolution," argue the other school, "have we been saved, from stalemate and the curse of weak government! Nor are polling figures ever the true measure of opinion. There really is such a shifting of tendencies as the majorities in Parliament represent. For when one man votes against the party which he normally supports, two who still are loyal at the poll are at heart disaffected. And surely, of all party tyrannies, the worst is that which a Government with a small majority is forced to use in order to retain it. With a majority of 44 there must be iron discipline. With a majority of 356, a large measure of independence is permitted."

For our part, we do not pretend that the argument on either side carries clear conviction. The inconvenience of small majorities would cease to be felt, if Governments abandoned the tradition that a defeat in the lobbies, even on a question of detail,

involves the necessity of resignation. One of the political evils of our generation has been the undue growth of the power of the Cabinet, and the increasing insignificance of the private member—a tendency which must end, if it continues, in lowering the whole level of intellect and character in the House. On one aspect of this cry for "strong Government" we do, however, feel inclined to insist. It is this tendency which explains the reluctance of average opinion to face the possibility of Single-Chamber government. Because the House of Commons is only imperfectly representative, because it is not a clear mirror of opinion, because the later changes in its constitution incline it to bow too meekly to the power of the Cabinet and the party machine, because its vote may, in the last resort and on a vital issue, be determined by the will of one man at the head of the machine, there is a plausible case for a Second Chamber. Perhaps the most pregnant sentence in this whole Report is that in which the Commission suggests that proportional representation might be a suitable basis for an elective Senate. We have our liberty of choice, and democracy may find its account in either alternative. We may prefer to retain an imperfectly representative Lower House. But if we place above it a really representative Senate, the whole balance of the Constitution might be altered, and the Senate become the more venerable, the more democratic, and, in the end, the more powerful Chamber. We may, on the other hand, reform the House of Commons, and render any Senate superfluous. In either event, proportional representation may become the ultimate key to our constitutional problem.

#### THE LESSON OF EAST DORSET.

Few Liberals, whatever their judgment may be on the result of the East Dorset petition, will view with approval the picture of the successful campaign presented by the prosecuting counsel and, to a limited degree, accepted by the Judges. It bears too much resemblance to the kind of electioneering which the Gladstone League was founded to discourage. Let us give it all the benefit of the doubts and acquittals of the Court. Lady Wimborne is a very able and accomplished woman, and when she enters a battle we may be quite sure that her mere talent and energy will count for nearly as much as her social influence. It is clear that she beat the Tory candidate in East Dorset, not only with the means which territorial influence used all over the country in the Protectionist cause, but with the brains that she liberally mixed with them. It is equally clear that Liberalism cannot adopt such a propaganda and achieve its general work of social emancipation for the country districts. We do not altogether blame Canford Manor. It was placed on its defence, and, indeed, was grossly attacked. It determined that it would not be mishandled and beaten back on ground where it thought that its influence had been fairly won. But its decision involved the fighting of the East Dorset election on lines in which the poorer party was almost bound to go to the wall, and on which, we have no doubt,

it has gone to the wall in many constituencies in Southern England. The East Dorset Liberal Association became in effect a branch of the Estate. In a single year, out of an expenditure of £874, £770 was found by the Wimborne family. The management of Canford, its policy on allotments and small holdings, and even the dismissal of its servants, became a leading issue in the contest at Poole. The estate manager watched the arrival of the estate voters at the poll. The motor-car service in Captain Guest's interest was provided by the Manor. The battle of words largely centred on the dealings of the Wimborne family with its workers at Dowlais. The end of it all was a large excess over the legal expenditure. The prosecuting counsel fixed this excess at over £2,000. The Judges inclined to take a more modest estimate. But the fight in East Dorset, in the version which the newspaper reports present, reads less like a conflict of modern politics than an account of the great electioneering frays of the last century. From such a reversion, Liberalism, with its vision of an economically free peasantry, cheap elections, unwatched and even uncavassed voters, the abolition of candidates' subscriptions, and a stricter definition of agency, must needs shrink in some dismay. The mere cost and duration of the East Dorset fight must frighten away the average democratic candidate. Apart from the immediate party purposes of Liberalism, we could not hope to win much permanent ground from the feudal interest if we were to give wealth and territorialism so powerful a hold on the mind of a country electorate.

For these reasons we are glad to have had the object-lesson of East Dorset, even though the experiment is made in the vile body of Liberalism. There is obviously a call for a new law of elections. The evil is a crying one, and East Dorset only lifts one corner of its abuses. Lady Wimborne, for example, was censured for the use of hired motor cars. How many thousands of such cars figured on the Conservative side at the election of 1910, and how many were legally employed? She was charged with having used her agent to "overlook" voters, and the family resources to popularise her son's candidature and send his picture broadcast over the constituency. How many estate agents stood at the doors of the booth during the January pollings? How much loose accounting, how much unauthorised printing and pamphleteering, figured in the cost of the great Protectionist pamphlet-and-poster campaign of last winter? How much delicate, or indelicate, nursing of constituencies led up to the final exhibition of the money-power which swept half England into the net of the Tariff Reformers? We have this impressionable mass in our population; it is childish to pretend that the means to impress it were not lavishly used by the side which could command at least nine-tenths of the feudal forces in England and Scotland. The law allows such uses, or some of them; and they are not all morally reprehensible. But they are inconsistent with really "true" electioneering, that is to say, with an election in which public issues are presented on their merits, and with the main object of winning intelligences rather than defending interests.

## Life and Letters.

### THE BOOK OF WORLDLY WISDOM.

THE "Wisdom" books of the Jews belong to a single literature. Tradition has cut a thick line between one class and the other. And the result has been that the "canonical" books of this time—Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, Job, many of the Psalms—are familiar to all who care for the English language: while the "Apocryphal"—Ecclesiasticus, the Wisdom of Solomon—are scarcely known to the general reader, except for one or two selected chapters. Mr. Laurence, in "The Wisdom of the Apocrypha" (John Murray), rightly pleads for their study. They belong to an age of scepticism, like the book of Job. They accept a scheme of life as in essence Vanity, like the book of Ecclesiastes. They collect the rules of successful conduct in an age of comfort, without extravagant ideals, like the book of Proverbs. They exalt the intellect and the intellectual principle, and break into mystical rhapsody, eloquent and a little pathetic, in singing the praise of Intelligence—the praise of Wisdom.

It is the voice of a tired civilisation: and within that civilisation it is the counsel of old age. Passion is absent from it, and all the divine fury of youth that is defiant and would attain. These are replaced by the aphorisms of prudence: the verdict of one who has known what youth was, and now, looking back, sees only the mistakes, none of the glory: who has seen so many youthful fires burn into ashes and a little dust. Reverence the powers that be, bow low before the rich and powerful, pick no quarrel with anyone capable of retaliation, be cautious about giving oneself wholeheartedly to a friend; beware of the dangers that lurk in the vine, the laurel, and the rose—so shall life be passed, if not in exultation, yet in some sort of satisfactory second best—before death closes all. It is not the doctrine of adventure or high endeavor. The "Gleam" has vanished over the skyline, and the ancient stars know too well the fate of all who have essayed heroic things. But here is the City State; with men tolerant and kindly, but, for the most part, seeking their own ends; glad if you can aid them, praising you if you are a good citizen, and do your duty and give no trouble, and order your household aright and bring up your sons to be good citizens in their turn. One seems to hear echoes of the English provincial press, shedding decent, but not too extravagant, tears over the demise of a local employer and councillor. "Not least of our merchant princes"; "Never willingly offended anybody"; "Ordered his business with a singular ability"; "Generous to the charities of the district"; "Ample fortune, which will be divided amongst his large family, who are already conspicuous in maintenance of their father's enterprise."

It is all admirable. The mind, if not the spirit, approves. It is the condition under which alone society can be maintained when all the disordered regions of the world have yielded to the advance of civilisation. Only it appears in history as emerging from other conditions, in which this wisdom scarcely operates, and as breaking down into a tumultuous decadence in which this wisdom is altogether swept aside. It seems in itself to hold none of the secrets of permanence. Behind it are the hard, fierce days of the old "superstitions," when Israel came out of Egypt, when Elijah contended alone on Mount Carmel against the prophets of Baal, when the great moral teachers broke into a kind of mystic passion as they looked to the vision of a satisfied social justice, with the redemption, not of man only, but of the warring kingdoms outside, the Lion lying down with the Lamb, led by a little child. But by the time this wisdom is compiled, all these dreams are—perhaps a little sadly—put by. The old men see the rich and the poor as permanent classes. The observer entertains no hope of a social regeneration. Here are the facts: make the best of them. "A rich man speaketh, and all keep silence: and what he saith they extol to the clouds.

A poor man speaketh, and they say, 'Who is this?' And if he stumble, they help to overthrow him." In the greatest of all these wisdom passages—in which the writer becomes inspired by the praise of "famous men and our fathers that begat us"—"leaders of the people by their counsels," and "such as sought out musical tunes"—there are also commended "rich men furnished with ability, living peaceably in their habitations." That the rich should behave as Mr. Carnegie, rather than as Mr. Hearst or Cecil Rhodes, seems to him to be in itself enough to entitle them to honor. For those who are not rich—even in the settled comfortable life—it is better not to excite envy, to keep in good odor with the great, to gain security by self-oblivation. Life, at best, is a difficult business—full of snares. "Lend not to a man that is mightier than thyself: and if thou lend, be as one that hath lost." "Be not surety above thy power." "Go not to law with a judge": "they" will certainly give judgment for him. "Open not thine heart to every man." "Give not thy soul to a woman." "As well as thou canst, guess at thy neighbours": and be intimate only with the commendable. Accept the Established Church: "fear the Lord with all thy soul, and reverence His priests." "Fear the Lord and glorify the priest: and give him his portion even as it is commanded thee: the first fruits, and the trespass offering and the gift of the shoulders, and the sacrifice of sanctification and the first fruits of holy things."

Mr. Laurence does right to emphasise the permanent value of such "wisdom," as important in the English countryside as in the crowded streets of Jerusalem. In general—don't think that life is an easy business, even if ordered and regulated. There is difficulty enough in attainment of comfortable old age, even although the ancient anarchy has yielded to order. Men are selfish and passionate, outside is a God who watches with eyes "ten thousand times brighter than the sun" for any deviation from the rigor of His rule. He is a "jealous God," not happily, as in later nightmares, with the power of committal of his creatures to unending torment. Indeed, one of the satisfactions in the contemplation of death is that, "whether it be ten or a hundred or a thousand years, there is no inquisition of life in the grave." But He is a God who has "created great travail for every man," and laid "a heavy yoke upon the Sons of Adam, from the day of their coming forth from their mother's womb, until the day for their burial in the mother of all things." And He is a God stealthily watchful; coming as a thief in the night, marking down those who swerve a hair's breadth from the appointed way, taking vengeance when least expected. Only He can be placated. And Jesus the Son of Sirach will sing His praises as lustily as the Jews sang praises on Holy Cross day, as the miserable Caliban will bite his lip till it bleeds after uttering blasphemy against Setebos. "Now with all your heart and mouth sing ye praises and bless the name of the Lord." It is a company of old men praising, hoping for a little more comfort and evening sunshine, before they die, with a furtive fear that some sin of childhood, of which they have not repented or which they have altogether forgotten, will suddenly be repaid.

And this "wisdom" carried with it, yesterday as to-day, the seeds of its own failure. There is pathos in the sight of age laying, as it were, all its cards on the table in its contest with youth, and youth exhibiting, without difficulty, the inherent weakness of its opponent's hand. Vanity of vanity, the old are crying. In the death of man there is no remedy. All alike—after a few brief years of existence—will be as though they had never been. "What is man?" asks Jesus of Sirach, "and whereto serveth he? What is his good and what is his evil?" "The number of man's days at the most are a hundred years. As a drop of water from the sea and a pebble from the sand, so are a few years in the day of Eternity." One dreadful, narrow house awaits alike man's passion and his pride. "Why is earth and ashes proud?" "It is a long disease:

the physician mocketh; and he is a king to-day, and to-morrow he shall die." "When a man is dead, he shall inherit creeping things and beasts and worms." The author of the "Wisdom of Solomon," in a passage of solemn and haunting eloquence, exhausts all natural imagery in order to express the transitory nature of man's being. His life passes as "a shadow," as "a message that runneth by," "as a ship passing through the billowy water," with no trace of its progress left behind; "as a bird that cleaveth the air, or an arrow shot at a mark; where the air, parted, closeth up again immediately." "So we also, as soon as we were born, ceased to be." From this assertion of a triumphant mortality old age seeks to teach youth abstinence and discipline and wisdom. Youth will never respond to such a message. Because death ends all, cries the voice of the teacher, shun pleasure. Because death ends all, is the reply of the learner, seek pleasure. "In thy youth thou hast not gathered," is the warning, "and how shouldest thou find in thine old age?" Youth will always be content to take the cash and let the credit go; to clutch at the real satisfaction of desire in a world where desire itself will so soon be as nothing.

Old age, in fact, sees these things recorded daily. It is full of sadness at the spectacle; but it has no satisfactory alternative teaching to offer, and it is dimly conscious of the lack of it. It sees its very argument turned against it, the strenuous virtue of a theistic or immortal belief collapsing before its own assertion of the vanity of human things. "They say," it complains, "short and sorrowful is our life: there is no healing when a man cometh to his end; none was ever known that gave release from Hades; by mere chance were we born, and hereafter we shall be as though we had never been." And it finds "them" accepting, as a natural consequence, the very practical results which, above all things, it desires to avoid. "Come, therefore, and let us enjoy the good things that now are; let us use the creation with all our soul as youth's possession. Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and perfumes; and let no flower, of spring pass by; let us crown ourselves with rosebuds before they be withered; everywhere let us leave tokens of our mirth, because this is our portion, and our lot is this." The "wisdom" of a world destined to inevitable destruction may exalt, as in these writers, the greatness of the intellect and the pleasures of knowledge, at the expense of the passions; it may advocate, as these advocate, discipline, prudence, respect for the old. Another Eastern "wisdom" will shatter these weak barriers: the wisdom which, seeking "great argument" to explain man's life and set it in a universe of eternal significance, and evermore coming out by the same door by which it entered, can finally exhort mankind in possession of the wine of life:—

"Drink, for ye know not whence ye come, nor why.

Drink, for ye know not when ye go nor where."

It is the philosophical problem that Sidgwick declared insoluble: how to construct an altruistic ethic out of a world in which the individual and the race alike are destined to be trodden down by time; how to distil imperishable values out of perishable things. Positive moralities—in France and elsewhere—are essaying the task with energy and courage. It cannot be said that they have advanced much beyond the wisdom of the Apocrypha. In one sanction, at least, they are deficient. The Eastern moralist could terrify his pupils with a vision of a God who would yet bring plagues and miseries upon those who defied His rule, whose eye could penetrate the roof of the harlot's house, and reach the cellars from which men drank deep. That "science" which sometimes endeavors to prove that youth's recklessness brings its own "inevitable" reward is but a poor substitute for this austere and sleepless watch. In actual history, this "wisdom," becoming tired even of itself, has always crumpled before some stronger spiritual force. Sometimes that force, recognising the declaration of Mortality, has produced an organisation of life based upon a definite denial: repudiation alike of hope and fear, in a world where existence has to be endured, but will not be accepted as good. Sometimes, as in the case



of these particular teachings, a way out has come by the breaking of the barriers. Humanity has found a new exultant inspiration in belief that man will be triumphant over time and dust, that heroic failure is more justified than sober success, and that the ultimate Power of the Universe should be symbolised less as a gaoler scrutinising his prisoners than as a Father pitying His children.

### THE TRUTH OF MIDNIGHT.

TWENTY-EIGHT years have passed since the genius of James Thomson found its cruel and sordid end in a London hospital. It is a lapse of time that commonly suffices to sweeten the acerbities even of theological controversy. The doubts of a dead Atheist cease to evoke the defiant contradiction. The miseries of a dead pessimist serve the pulpit as a warning against his gloomy creed. The fellow-rebels of his generation have long since passed into the odor of sanctity. Who was there, when at last he died, who remembered that any shoulder had ever shrugged at Meredith's name? What echo of the old denunciations lingered when Swinburne was buried? And even Bradlaugh, who was for twenty years the ally and friend of Thomson, came to his burial amid the salutes of the armies he had fought. In the battle against orthodoxy, it is longevity which wins. When the world fails to overwhelm the young rebel, it prepares itself to do honor to his grey hairs. James Thomson's mistake was that he died at fifty, broken by poverty, despair, and drink. Had he but continued for another twenty years to defame the nature of things, the laurels would ere now have grown on his grave. The nature of things is essentially opportunist. It bows to persistent calumny, and prefers no suits for libel against a grey-beard. It is another sort of immortality which in the end will come for Thomson. When all who remembered as living men that angry, distempered Atheism of the 'seventies are safely in their graves, when a world converted to the Higher Criticism and the New Theology has forgiven the rude assaults of its frontal attack, the records that he left of its mood will be studied as human documents, and the lines that he wrote under its inspiration will take their due rank among the few great things added to the store of English poetry in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The moment, it may be, is all but come for the dramatic recognition, and the appearance of a little volume, half critical, half biographical, from the pen of Mr. Bertram Dobell ("The Laureate of Pessimism." Dobell) may help to hasten the inevitable.

Only a biographer of supreme genius could create for us a living portrait of the fierce and miserable spirit that built for itself an Inferno in Mid-Victorian England. The son of a ship's mate and a native of Port Glasgow, Thomson sprang from the same racial stock and the same social stratum which produced a Burns and a Tannahill. His education, indeed, was more studied and academic than theirs. He was trained to earn a secure, if meagre, living as an army school-master, and he found leisure to master the whole range of European Literature, and became, in the process, a notable German and Italian scholar. Three events alone stand out in his early years—the death of his first love, his meeting with the young dragoon who afterwards became the famous Bradlaugh, and his dismissal from the army for his share in a drunken escapade. In his own reading of his career, it was the loss of his girl sweetheart which laid the foundation of his pessimism. His *nom de plume* (Byssche Vanolis) claimed affiliation first to Shelley and then to Novalis, in whose spiritual history a like bereavement had a like effect. And, indeed, one is startled to come, amid the blackest gloom that broods over his collected work, upon some happy fragment which reveals the simple affections, the tender and reverent attitude towards women, that no happy love was destined to reward. The portrait of "The Sleeper" and the pretty miniature, in "Up the River," of the "little straw hat with the streaming blue ribbons" are the work of a man who understood, in all his wanderings among meta-

physical sorrows and nightmare despairs, the simple happinesses and the common human joys. Bradlaugh looms up in Thomson's career with more than the significance which Godwin had in Shelley's. Godwin still stood in a respectable and well-connected line of rationalists. His was the revolt of philosophy, a scepticism which still affected the grand manner, and avoided the applause of mobs. Bradlaugh's was a proletarian Atheism, conceived in barrack-rooms and propagated at street-corners. The revolt which Thomson sang was a democratic protest against the supreme Autocrat. He was content to bury his greatest work in the obscure free-thought weeklies, which were the typical product of this period. One might read his more dignified writings, with their opulent vocabulary, their easy rhythms, their accent of educated speech, and attribute them to a scholar born to leisure. But his consciousness of class leaps up insurgent and contemptuous in "Sunday at Hampstead":—

"On Sunday we're Lord and Lady  
With ten times the love and glee  
Of those pale and languid rich ones  
Who are always and never free."

It speaks again with a furious Republican malice in the neat lyrical epigrams of "L'Ancien Régime." It tells of the narrow life of privation which is the lot of the intellectual born in an alien caste, in that most moving of his lesser poems, where the decrepit furnishings of a poor man's garret gossip over the suicide's bed. The whole phase of thought belongs to that last sterile period in the history of the European proletariat, before Socialism had given it something like a constructive purpose, religion had broadened, and a new optimistic faith was beginning to stir in the souls of men. While Thomson was comforting a broken heart with classical lines and cheap whisky, Karl Marx was working away in the British Museum at the theory which was to give the working class a hope of conquest and a vision of eventual, though material, good. These philosophic comforts were nothing to Thomson. He saw in history only the records of futile revolt and hopes forlorn, and his world staggered on, sure only to repeat its sodden miseries. His Atheism lacks the calmness of certainty. It is not so much a denial as a defiance. Its mood is neither contempt nor dogmatism. It is the outrageous anger of the under-dog.

"Who is most wretched in this dolorous place?  
I think myself; yet I would rather be  
My miserable self than He, than He  
Who formed such creatures to His own disgrace."

One suspects that under all the furious words of denial there lurked in the secret places of Thomson's brain some relic of belief, some cell so shaped by its Calvinistic ancestry that it could not deny. It hated, indeed, and, as the most exquisite revenge which it could conceive against its Creator, it formed its lips to a denial. The outcasts who wander in his limbo, because they had no hope to leave behind them at the gates of Hell, were the men of that Mid-Victorian age who had not yet armed themselves with the comforts of the new reading of history. His work, as he said himself, told the "truth of midnight." There was a dawn to come.

A mood is worth the songs it sings. A creed is worth the cathedral it builds. And it is this mood and this creed which have given us the greatest poem of its generation. From the majesty of its title to the bitter calm of its concluding stanza, "The City of Dreadful Night" is indeed a great poem. Other poets have written nightmare visions, and there are occasional touches in Thomson's work that remind us of Coleridge and even of Poe and Baudelaire. But this is nightmare that has become a system. Its dreams have the vastness and rigidity of great architecture. The stones have been painfully hewn; its filigree Gothic rests on firm foundations. If this is nightmare, it is a Scotsman's nightmare. It is lucid and logical in its delirium, and cogent in its terrors. This is, indeed, no vision city of a rare insomnia. It is a dream that has grown into solidity by the repetition of its unsparing torment:—

"But when a dream night after night is brought  
Throughout a week, and such weeks, few or many,

Recur each year for several years, can any  
Discern that dream from real life in aught?"

It is, indeed, an intellectual Hell, and nothing in any medieval Inferno afflicts the spirit like the steadiness and the reasonableness of its mere despair. In the old Hells, at least, there was action, multitude and motion, companionship and variety. Here is nothing but the brooding inane, the mere recognition of failure and emptiness. Its very moderation is its most refined cruelty, and one rises from it with Shelley's line on one's lips, "Hell is a city much like London." Critics have called the poem monotonous. But what a variety is there in it of craftsmanship and imagination! Its versification can move with that easy, serpent-like insinuation that is a sort of jointed and acrobatic prose, the movement of Byron's "Don Juan." It can rise to a stateliness that recalls "Adonais." It has its sections of colored and romantic fresco-work, like the description of the haunted desert round the city where one sees, as in some mad etching by Méryon, "enormous things . . . with savage cries and clanking wings." It has its sculpture gallery, where the imagery of nightmare grows of a sudden plastic and austere, a thing no less horrible because of the beauty of its perfect form. It can be epigrammatic like that haunting refrain:—

"But I strode on austere,  
No hope can have no fear."

It has its episodes like the dialogues of the lost souls, and the awful picture of the spirit which had no hope to deposit as its entrance-fee to Hell. In every picture and every speech it arrests. For it was the singularity of Thomson's genius that the white heat of its furnace of despair turned out its bronzes definite and firm. When he speaks, it is classical oratory. When he depicts, it is moulded sculpture. When he plans his city of nightmare, it has all the form and concreteness which happier dreamers have given to their Cities of the Sun. There is in his visions nothing fantastic, no elusive veil, no gossamer outline, no fragrance of an opium cloud. He bites his picture on perennial copper with the acid of anger and pain. Such work can wait securely for the justice of time. Its masonry is not of yielding brick, its statuary is not of crumbling stone. It will outlive the age that produced it. It tells a truth that is true—at midnight.

#### THE "SWEETNESS" OF LONDON.

SOME six or seven years ago you might see a queer little figure, ill-fed and ill-clothed, with inset eyes and black hair all on end, trotting up and down the London streets, much like a cab-runner in pursuit of luggage. Sometimes, indeed, he was following cabs, or running at their side, his eyes fixed intently on the horse—so intently that, in spite of his agility, he would dash into people and lamp-posts, and apologise with a smile to soften iron. Once he knocked down a little boy, and then, as he said, "I had trouble with his mother." But it was not luggage he pursued; he was only watching how horses lift their feet. Or sometimes he would fix his attention on the passers-by, watching how ladies hold up their skirts—to him a perpetual wonder. Or, if he ever had a few shillings to spare, which cannot have happened more than once every two years, he went to a good restaurant, not for the food, but to watch the manners and appearance of well-to-do people. For he was Yoshio Markino, at that time a starving artist, and, in his own words, "only nice subject and nice composition were his real delight."

One day the present writer asked him whether he did not often long to leave our dark and cheerless city, and return to his own brilliant land. One had heard poetic travellers tell of Japan as the islands of silvery laughter; one had heard of the gentle manners and exquisite courtesy, concealing even grief under the politeness of a smile; and one had seen pictures of that eternal cherry-blossom, and of radiant harmonies in color, soothing enough in themselves to banish care.

Why should a Japanese and an artist linger in this muddy country, where we stifle all winter, and shiver into May; where we sulk without grief, and seldom speak without a swear? For a moment, a look of pain passed over the little Japanese face; then it smiled again, and he said, "No, no! I never go back! Japan is so melancholy."

It was a terrible blow to one's ideals—as terrible as when he took us down to Tilbury Dock to see a Japanese ship. We expected yellow sails emblazoned with the rising sun in scarlet, and a captain in a Kimono stuck with Samurai swords; and we found a Clyde steamer, with nothing Japanese about it but the crew and the directions on the post-box. How could anyone call these laughing islands melancholy compared to our own querulous land which takes its pleasures sadly, and has darkened with its spleen all that broad band of empire on which the night never sets? It seemed an ironic perversion; but the artist was quite serious. His happy boyhood had been spent in Japan, and now he had been some five or six years in London, often friendless, usually in such extremes of poverty that the drinking-fountains supplied his meals, and he stitched his socks into the seat of his trousers for decency. Yet he quite seriously looked back on Japanese life as melancholy compared to ours, or even compared to his own life among us.

It has long been a puzzle to the present writer. He has usually tried to explain the words as referring to the genuine pessimism of a Buddhistic people who regard all life as a sorrowful illusion, the body as a slowly putrifying carcase, and absolute extinction as the most enviable consummation. Such doctrines, widely diffused, might cast a shadow over the whitest cherry blossom, whereas our own pessimism that bemoans the present world as a vale of tears is never really believed, and the voice that breathes through Mr. Roosevelt never seriously proclaims the extermination of body and soul as the true aim of man. To some extent that seemed to explain the paradox, but Mr. Markino's new book, "A Japanese Artist in London," published by Messrs. Chatto & Windus, brings many fresh lights with it. The volume has a peculiar charm throughout. It is the revelation of a gallant, innocent, and lovable spirit, speaking its real thoughts with singular frankness. But to English people it should be especially welcome, because it reveals certain qualities in our race that most foreigners, and we English ourselves, usually deny or overlook.

Take politeness, for instance; how long we have endured the scorn of the French, the Irish, the Russians, and most other races for our want of it! We have regarded the deficiency as past praying for; we have listened to the jeers and reproaches with godlike, or at least assumed, indifference, only hoping we might possess other qualities in compensation. But hear the Japanese artist's first and lasting impressions (it is true he was coming straight from San Francisco):—

"I started my first sightseeing from Hyde Park and the Green Park and St. James's Park. . . I so timidly walked inside the rail. Nobody shouted me. Then I went near the crowds of people with still more fear. . . I waited and waited with beating heart, but nothing happened to me at all. I walked into the crowds who were feeding birds in the lake of St. James's Park. Nobody spat on me! I ventured myself into the thickest crowds, and I was squeezed between the peoples. Nobody took any notice of me. 'Hallo, hallo, what's matter?' I said in my heart. 'Perhaps they don't know I am a Japanese.' I took off my hat in purpose to show my black hair. Finally, one man pushed me quite accidentally, and he touched his hand to his hat and apologised me very politely. I realised at last that I was in the country where I could enjoy my liberty quite freely. Fancy polite apology instead of swearing and spitting! I felt as if I had come to a paradise in this world, and I was quite melted with comfort."

Perhaps the world scoffs at our bad manners chiefly because we keep our politeness at home and export our insolence, duty free. In India, where, as Lord Morley said, bad manners are a crime, the tone is set by officials, whose position makes them feel superior, while everyone who addresses them is suspected of being likely to give them extra trouble without extra pay. But, apart from officials, our sup-



posed impoliteness abroad is probably due to shyness rather than insolence; especially to our baffling ignorance of foreign languages, which makes us feel fools, and drives us to self-assertion in the hope of disproving our foolishness. At home we can afford to stand on an equality, the first necessity for all politeness.

But below the external expression of good manners, so valuable in itself and now so widely diffused by our Board Schools, at least among the poorer and half-educated classes—below this outward politeness there is that "politeness of heart," so much more valuable still. Bismarck denied it to the French (he was at that time encamped at the gates of Paris), but he said the Germans and English both possessed it in high degree. We need not argue from race to race; Mungo Park discovered genuine politeness of heart on the unknown Niger. But to English people there is some satisfaction in finding that this Japanese artist's experience shows, above all other qualities, the politeness of heart existing among the largest classes—the working-classes—of our country.

His descriptions of the families with which he lodged are the most delightful parts of the book. In Greenwich, Brixton, Kensal Rise, Chelsea—wherever he made his simple home, it was always the same; everywhere he was received with the same unaffected politeness of heart. We must remember that his landlords were either superior workmen or small shopkeepers, just the class whom most people would regard as the least sincere or natural in courtesy—the people who have the most fear of falling into the class below them, and it is that fear which makes a more acrid snobbery even than the parvenu's hope of rising into a class above. Yet among all Mr. Markino's landladies, their husbands, and children, it is only difficult to choose which is the best type of a free, generous, and sweet-tempered nature. Let us take a few sentences about a blacksmith's family at Kensal Rise:—

"They had such a sweet home, if poor. Many rich peoples ought to be ashamed before them if they saw such a sweet harmony in their devotion to each other. . . . They charged so little for my meals; practically it was only the original price of the food. . . . My last penny was gone then, and I got into debt with that poor landlord. His wages were only £2 a week, and he had to keep his wife and four children. I was too sorry for them to take meals there, so I did not come back for luncheon; I used to drink water from fountains in the streets. It was my only luncheon then; my landlady knew that. Every morning when I left the house she used to say to me, 'Come back for meals, and please don't starve yourself!' How could I accept these kind words from such a poor woman? It was only heartbreaking to me; and she also said to me, 'Good luck, to-day,' every morning, and she was waiting me in the evenings to hear 'happy news.' It was awfully difficult for me to enter into the house after fruitless tasks all day, because she was such a sympathetic woman, and she often showed me her tears and said, 'Never mind about your debts to us, but I am so sorry for your own hard life.'"

In the end she even took a little from the money they laid by for rent, and gave it to the artist for food. "It is too great a temptation for me to control," she said. "I cannot bear to see such an honest man like you starve."

It was different when he came to "business," which he calls the Soul of England, just as Honor is the Soul of Japan. There he found, as he says, "the dirty merchant spirits which perish all good friendship." Indeed, the present writer, though acquainted with business ways, was often astonished that fairly reputable firms could thus swindle a starving foreign artist, endowed with so much talent. Mr. Markino has come to his own now, but among all his drawings of the "Color of Rome," the "Color of Paris," and the rest, we doubt if there is any more attractive than the picture he here gives in words of the sweetness of London. It is pleasant to hear how he "enjoyed himself with fogs"; how he loved the crowds, which he calls "the human bath"; how he liked best in "sweet London" the "safety in the midnight"; how he was so much attracted by the photos of English actresses that he lost his work as designer of the angels on tombstones because he could not help making them like ballet girls; and how much he appreciated the society of all "jolly John Bulls and John Bullesses"—"as long as no business is concerned,

they are all perfectly darlings!" But to English people as a nation the most encouraging point in the book is the artist's description of the average men and women he knew in his periods of distress. They are the people who really make the country. We could lose the rich, the professional men, and persons of genius without changing our national character much. But the real people—the men and women who live "in the first intention," without introspection or theory—are revealed to us by this sympathetic Oriental as endowed with a singular sweetness, a kindliness of manner, a generous "politesse de cœur." It is true that everyone only sees what he brings, but still the portrait is so sincere and unaffected that we wish to think it real; and the best of a pleasing portrait is that the sitter grows like it.

#### THE REPENTANCE OF MAY.

It was during the early days of May that Earth, which had been romping towards blossom, found a check, broke her amble into a walk, and nearly stopped dead. Flowers liked this shrewish May even less than we did. Even those that thrive on copious watering seemed actually parched in the midst of those almost continuous showers. They seemed more inclined to put out prickles than large, cool leaves, as though their ambition was to ape those paradoxes of the botanist, xerophytes that live in water.

The gardener told us that the night frosts were to answer for it. We were looking at the sad sweet peas as he spoke. Many of them thrust out a mere leafless straw from the soil, withered hands of protest against the murderousness of Mother May. We had thought that slugs must have bitten the shoots off, then that the sparrows had been trying their scissors on them in pure mischief. But the gardener said it was the frost. It can only have come for an hour or two hours on one or two early mornings, for when there has been none at midnight and none on getting up, the gardener has assured us there has been a sharp nip. There has been ice, too, for us to see, and that is hanging testimony. But we think the gardener has argued too much from these late frosts.

You can get ice from evaporation, never, it is true, without the temperature sinks to freezing point, but by a very local chilling. Even a frozen bird-saucer does not prove that the flower-bed next to it has been frozen, any more than ice pudding for dinner proves that the mutton was cold. An interested observer of these May frosts has written us that they attacked the ground only, not rising more than a foot above it. He admits that the early potatoes were ruined, and we can give the gardener his gooseberries and the sweet peas and such other tender losses as he imputes to the discredit of his ancient enemy, the early frost. It has not, however, been a phenomenal May for night frosts, and the damage we have suffered, if damage it be, must be put down more to the ungenial character of the days.

Our opinion, which we dare not breathe to the gardener, is that we have been suffering from drought. Drought in the midst of abundant rain. Thus did the Ancient Mariner suffer from thirst in the midst of the sea. There has been "water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink." It has been lying, as it lies in a mild winter, in barren soil, a soil with sleeping microbes or drowned microbes, and the plants must sleep till the microbes wake up and triturate the water for their use. Then the wind, which was ever with us, has swept continually over the soil, carrying away the top moisture, not by its warmth, but by its velocity. It dried the surface film into a cake that set round the tiny necks of the plants, choking them, almost cutting their throats in a sheet of midday "ice," far more deadly than the more or less mythical ice of the morning frosts. If a stick was thrust into this cake, it crackled and broke far round, as ice or glass breaks. It not only imprisoned the newly germinated seeds, but also kept the air out from the soil round established roots. Or it rose up in bubbles, lifting the plants from their roots and exposing them to the blast. Warm winds would not



have produced this seal of glass, for they would have brought moisture out from the depth of the soil to replace that drawn from the top. But our winds of early May were always cold. They were not all east winds. There were winds from the west and from the south, but even these were cold winds. Many were wet, but as soon as they had loosened the cake they blew it dry again.

Just as the rainy days were days of drought, so the first day of sunshine, without wind, acted like a shower on ploughed land and garden, wood and meadow. Stomata opened; transpiration tubes began to act freely; streams of vapor ascended, swirled round the roots, pierced and vitalised the crust, drove through the grass, hung in the placid air, made the lambs gambol again in a field of flowers. It was like the end of the long wait for the cleansing eruption of a Turkish bath. We had begun to think it would never come, but a turn of the temperature broke an age of stone, and brought us the full luxuriance of May. The fool's parsley has leapt waist-high, the hawthorn has broken out into scented lather, the dandelions are a cloth of gold, the woods swim in blue—leafy June is announced.

At length the bees are certain of their summer. Three times, at intervals of some ten days, we saw the golden *Andrena* come forth. One generation gemmed the pear blossoms; rain came and swept them to the ground. They came again, and began to dig their holes in the lawn, but the wind rolled them in the dust, destroying them in hundreds. Now we have them again, a far livelier generation, restlessly sunning themselves on the laurel leaves, determined to enjoy themselves awhile before rubbing their gold jackets away in mining operations. There has been a hard check, also, given to the hive bees. The blossoms have not yielded nectar as they should, and the winning of such nectar as there was has been far more costly than usual. After many cold days, the sycamores were able one morning to brew a little honey. But the bees that came for it were like ships in a tornado. Sometimes they were blown away to leeward, sometimes plunged headlong beyond the blossom they tried to reach, and many a merchant started home far too crippled to reach the hive. The stocks dwindled at a rapid rate, and, because there was little pollen brought in, the nurses failed to make up the waste. Cold nights contracted the cluster, and for an important week or more the queen almost ceased to lay eggs. There will be a week soon, and that about swarming-time, when no bees are hatching out, and the pressure that sends the swarm out will come a good deal later than usual. The "swarm in May that is worth a load of hay" will be the exception, the mere silver spoonsworth of June being the rule.

Still, those to whom bees are the merest side interest will smile through that misfortune if certain other insects have been checked to a corresponding extent. The gardener believes that the blight has received a check from which it will not easily recover. Such flocks of aphides as there were have survived the bad weather. We see them on the rose bushes and elsewhere, ready to resume operations now that warmth has come in. All that we can hope is that an early generation has been cut out from the usual list of nine or ten. Still, that is much. We have not yet had one of those swarming days when the green bugs, having arrived at the dignity of wings, spring into the air, and are drifted in millions to fresh pasturage. When swarming day comes, may the swallow and every other bird be there to guard us, with appetite multiplied by many mouths at home. It is the early shower of blight on very tender leaves that we fear most. The tenderest leaves were stripped off by those fierce winds of early May, and perhaps those that are left are of a hardihood to withstand blight.

A week ago we thought a great deal of the damage that had been done. Truly, the wheat was a sad sight when those drying winds swept the soil. But now that a still, steamy May has come, the world is reviving wonderfully. The plums have gone, but it was April, not May, that slew them. Apples and pears have been thinned, but the operation is always necessary. They have not been thinned excessively, the trees are unusually clean,

and we think there must be now a good apple and pear year. The great good news is that the grass is springing. A week ago the coarser grasses were luxuriant, but the tender herbage that in an old meadow is as sugar to lambkins and milch cows was slow to come. The farmer looked across fields that seemed to ripple knee-deep, and declared that there was no grass. He could scarcely see an end to the misery that would happen if there should not be some grass soon. And, as though by the stroke of a wand, the grass has come. It is growing round the "golden hooves" of sheep as though it could race their appetite, it is springing in the fields that are to be mowed, so that shortly they will be as bowls of grass, heaped up and running over the hedges. The corncake runs about in it like a diver in a deep sea. The starlings that go there for worms and "leather-jackets" dive into it and are lost. Always one of the sweetest employments of the year is to walk through a lush meadow in May. More than ever delightful is it when a timid and distrustful generation has doubted whether there was to be any grass.

## Pictures of Trabel.

BY THE LOIRE.

GOLDSMITH, fluting his way through the villages that variegated the pleasant borders of the Loire, and earning courteous praise from joyous dancers, young and old, by the magic of his "tuneless" pipe, had a better chance than the modern motorist, who rushes through these same villages, leaving dust and stench in his train, of comprehending their simple life. In so far as he did comprehend it, it was on the side which most nearly reflected his own. The poet-vagabond, with his Celtic insouciance and his Celtic charm, touched a vein of kinship in these peasant-folk of old France, who frisked so lightly, at the beck of his faltering note, under the feudal burdens which their children were so vehemently to discard. The central figure in his picture, and the setting, are in wonderful harmony, and he might pass for the very embodiment of that facile grace, that in-born, unconquerable gaiety, of the French people, which made it so easy to wander through the land, and see no faintest symptom of the coming storm.

To the modern traveller that flute and dance-music, the careless gaiety of the surface of French rural life, may still be audible enough. But across it he will be apt to hear strains of a fiercer and more strident music, rising at moments to an ardent and heroic beauty. From Orleans, where the great river turns definitively towards the west, to Nantes, where it begins to taste and smell of the sea, the borders of the Loire are crowded with memorials and reminiscences of the tragedy and the splendor of the story of France. Royalist and Republican in deadly grip at Nantes, where the heaved anchor, for years after the Revolution, brought to the surface victims of the *noyades*; Huguenots massacred at Amboise, the Guises at Blois. Orleans was the scene of the most brilliant and decisive triumph of Jeanne d'Arc, and the whole city still makes festival on its anniversary, the eighth of May. And a hundred and twenty miles down the river is the lonely keep of Morains, in its quiet garden, above the village of Dampierre, to which Jeanne's more unfortunate, but hardly less heroic, countrywoman, Margaret of Anjou, returned, only a few years later, from the ruins of the House of Lancaster, and her husband's grave.

At Morains we are already within the gates of Anjou; and in Anjou, the home of the Plantagenets, the English traveller is apt to feel, or to persuade himself that he feels, almost on native ground. Angers, the ancient capital, on its steep rock-fortress above the Maine, perhaps even now, in spite of the severity of the reconstructive and "restorative" processes which it has undergone during the last half century, retains more monuments of Henry II. than London ever possessed. And at Fontevault, in the forest valley that breaks south from the Loire, some thirty miles away, Henry

himself, and Richard I., repose under effigies which reproduce the countenances of these kindred, but unlike, kings, with singular expressive power. These Angevin princes have been transmuted by the alchemy of popular tradition into true-born Englishmen, and French "Cordelion" shares with Celtic Arthur the glory of becoming the most famous national hero of a race whom the one desperately resisted, and of whose language the other scarcely understood a word.

But if English associations inevitably mingle with French in Anjou, the country lying along the great river between its eastern borders and Orleans is not only French, but more intensely and intimately French than any other part of France. Blois was long credited with speaking French in its purest form; and thither the excellent Joseph Addison—and how many others after him!—resorted to acquire it. The provincialisms, not of speech only, which accentuate the life of other parts of France, seem to temper or efface one another in this central region, which looks towards the Celtic north-west and towards the Frankish north-east, towards Gascony, and towards Auvergne; accessible to all, but subdued by none. Rabelais, the type of that peculiarly French gift of jesting in deadly earnest, which is apt to bewilder the Germanic critic, was born at Chinon, some twenty miles from Tours, and occupied a small, but beautiful, Renaissance house still extant, at Langeais, almost within sight of its twin spires. And Touraine is the chief home of an architecture more expressive than any other of French mentality—neither mystic and aspiring, like the Gothic of the north, nor Roman and massive, like the Romanesque of the south, but pervaded, in every detail, by a joyous, yet ordered, beauty—that of the Châteaux of the early Renaissance.

The more notable of the Châteaux with which Touraine is so richly studded rise from the banks of the Loire itself; and the great river is their indispensable setting, an unobtrusive, but subtly harmonious, accompaniment to their unheard melodies. Of vast breadth in proportion to its volume, it wanders, for ever dividing and reuniting, a wilderness of waters; untouched by traffic, and preserving, even when it laps against the granite of a city quay, the air of a river still full of the zest of its native hills, and untamed by the hand of man; yet, with all its wildness, blithe and gay and sparkling; majestic by its large spaces of moving light, but without terror or gloom, and ever beckoning the observant eye with subtle caprices of current and eddy, delicate fantasias upon the main theme of its motion, such as only these broad, shallow, leisurely rivers know.

It is this tempered, humane, laughing, variable wildness that appeals to the French taste in the things of Nature. The more decisive and daring beauty, the menacing or defiant savagery, which take the heart of the English nature-lover, are hardly so much as hinted along the banks of the Loire. They bear vines, and castles, like those of the Rhine, but of the Rhine's crags and buttresses and dark defiles, they know as little as of its busy traffic and its rushing tide. And the castles are not legendary ruins, the frowning keeps of robber-knights, shattered by the artillery of the sixteenth century, and consigned, since, to the reign of moonlight and the moping owl. The medieval fortresses of the Loire, about the time when those of the Rhine were being thus qualified to fecundate the romantic appetencies of the modern spirit, underwent a quite different transformation into country palaces, where the stately forms of antique art reappeared, touched with the peculiar grace and charm of old France. For a full half-century, the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth, Touraine was the residence of the French kings and court. The castles at once acquired an importance as country seats, which they were rapidly losing as strongholds; and everywhere the social and civil genius, which lies yet deeper in the French nature than military ardor or revolutionary passion, began to assert itself in the refashioning of these noble homes; providing amenities and luxuries with the same facility of resource

once expended in defying the strategy of besiegers and the cunning of captives. The grim monotony of stone wall became a facade with richly-sculptured windows and open galleries and alcoves; the dark winding stairway, in the recesses of a round tower, became a graceful arcaded escalier, on whose spiral steps the air and sun played freely from three sides. The gaunt simplicity of the great hall, where men of all ranks met at the common meal, gave place to smaller and choicer apartments, where men and women conversed.

But the French Renaissance, unlike the Italian, loved, where it could, to give a new turn to the medieval forms, instead of abolishing them; it caressed the grim Gothic traditions in the act of assuaging them, and arrived at some of its most charming effects by simply adopting, for purposes of ornament, devices like the crenellated battlement, primarily designed for the discharge of melted lead and other amenities upon an enemy below. And very often the moat, and even the drawbridge, remained, as they do at Chenonceaux; but you approached them through fountains and statued gardens; and along the moat ran, most probably, a sculptured balustrade, while the suspended hostility of the drawbridge was belied by the open-armed welcome of an ample portal. And then these castle-builders, with all their Latin and Italian taste, were not afraid to graft upon the château the romance, the profusion, the grotesquerie, of the Gothic church, only, always, a little ordered and regulated.

It is thus with the most majestic of all the châteaux, Chambord. As you approach by one of the long forest avenues—and France loves the long vista with the palace at the end—you see, far away, between the dark masses of trees on either side, what seems like another forest—a bewildering crowd of gables, turrets, chimney-stacks, pinnacles, minarets, domes, darkening or dazzling against the sky, according to the light, and mirrored in the quiet waters that once formed the moat. The walls that support this architectural forest are themselves severally plain and unadorned; as if the builders had wrought in the soberest and austere of tempers till they reached the eaves, and had then suddenly broken out into a riotous debauch of intoxicated fancy, a dream of marvels and prodigies suspending all the laws of prose. In outbursts like these the romance of the French middle-age, a blithe, robust, and hardy spirit, saved itself all through the sixteenth century from the impending doom which, in the days of Louis XIV., crushed it out. In the architecture of these châteaux, as in the life that throbbed and flashed through their brilliant halls and chambers, order was still touched with picturesqueness, and civility with wildness, neither winning a decisive triumph over the other. And their fit setting was the scenery of the great inland river near whose banks they stood—it, too, of a civil wildness, gay and capricious with all its elemental strength, wearing its inborn majesty with an air of blithe amenity.

Chambord is now empty, and the eloquent expositions of the uniformed guide do not go far to restore to the mind's eye a past which the Revolution has banished to a seemingly infinite distance. But one institution of sixteenth-century society has survived even the Revolution. The hunt is still up in the woods of Chambord; and the visitor to-day, who chances to catch sight of the pack of hounds, twinkling white and brown amongst coverts, or to hear the winding of the horn along the river levels, may easily project himself into the days when Francis I.—a bad king with exquisite taste—wrote his death-warrants in one of the most delicately beautiful little cabinets ever contrived.

C. H. HERFORD.

## Short Studies.

OLWEN.

OLWEN was eighteen, a Welsh girl, with light brown hair so loosely coiled and so abundant that no fancy was needed to see it down to her knees, an oval face,



not plump enough to conceal the bones of cheeks and bold chin, a clear, wild-rose complexion, lit up from within as by moonlight, and dark eyebrows that had wild, clear curves like the wings of some bird of the free waste lands, and curved lips that never hid the perfect teeth when at rest. She wore the clothes of a slattern. She walked and stood still and sat down with the pride of an animal in the first year when it has a mate. The curlew, the hare, the sheep upon the mountain, were not wilder, or swifter, or more gentle than she. Her face and stature were those of a queen in the old time whose father was a shepherd on the solitary mountains. Being as strong as a man, she had finished her work early in the factory and come straight home, and, tucking up her skirts, had scrubbed and polished her mother's house. There was no pleasant way of being idle in the daytime, for, except with her lover, she did not care to walk to the mountain or to the black village streets. She laid tea, served it, and washed up. She was the only one who was not going out for the evening, for she had to bake the week's bread. Before the lamp had to be lit, her brother's wife, with her baby, came in. The first batch of cakes was already out of the oven. Their perfume streamed out through the open door, which let in the song of the blackbird, the wind from the mountains, and the majesty of the evening. Olwen could rest now; she took the baby, and they sat down and began to gossip.

The married girl was a little older, slender and dark-haired, with small, sharp features and full lips, pleasure-loving, gay, and sharp-tempered, rapid in her speech. This was her first child, and she kept, as yet, all her maiden attractiveness and irresponsibility, and added to it the different power of one who is captive but unconquered. She sighed lightly now and then, as if she relished and remembered over-much the youth she retained. She seemed to feel the advantages she had over the unmarried Olwen, without being able to overcome a phantom of admiration for her that might at any moment turn to envy.

Olwen, being the eldest of ten, held the baby like a mother. Her face bent down to it, her shoulders and arms walled it, in an experienced way. She knew all that she would ever know about the care of infants—even their death. The young mother, watching her, would now and then cull the baby from her lap and press it to herself, and cover it with kisses. If there were cries, it was Olwen who silenced them in her deep breast; but the mother had the craftiness to let the maid seem to be their cause, and when the child was with the other she would tease it, in the hope of being the comforter. It would have been hard for a stranger to say whose was the child, since Olwen's attention to this one baby out of many was as perfect as the mother's to the only one. The mother was lively and effusive, yet careless; the maid was calm and tender, and never forgetful. The mother could have been a model for Aphrodite, the maid for Demeter. The mother was a lover first; the maid was born maternal, and her heart could be stormed by a sweetheart, but ruled only by a child. The mother was destined for a man or for several men; there was somewhere a man destined for the maid, to open for her a kingdom which she would enter alone. The mother pressed the child to her with a luxurious smile, as if the lover were there, too; the maid resembled some noble animal, calm, but with a half-hid ferocity that would have talons if need were, even for the father of its brood. The mother was an elf, a not purely human creature, a haunting, disquieting form of life, a marshlight out of the wilds of time, and to be blown away with time again; the maid was the beginning and the end of human life, necessity itself made beauty, mere humanity raised to a divine height, the very topmost plume on the crest of life's pride. And yet behind the physical glory of Olwen, her bold, easy gait, her deep voice, full of nobility and sweetness, behind all her courage and robustness and independence, there was a something like the timidity of the stag who stands on the rock in the moment of his greatest power and joy, without fear, and yet has

an ear and a nostril for every breath of the summer gale.

The baby was with its mother when Olwen's lover entered the room. It was still half-lit by the great fire and the pale sky after sunset. Seeing the two girls and the child, he sat in the darkest of the chairs and kept his cap in his fingers. The mother gave the child to Olwen, and the young man became silent. The maid hardly looked at him, while the young mother, glad to see a man, bantered her visitor in vain even when she said laughing:

"Olwen has a baby now, John, and you see she can do without its father."

The young man fingered his cap, but looked musingly at Olwen out of the shadow. She had no eyes or ears but for the little thing that was now fully awake and standing on her lap and putting its hands into her mouth and eyes. Now she caught it quickly under the armpits and, throwing back her head, lifted it at arm's length and let it plant its feet upon her throat, then between her breasts, and so down to her lap; it crowed and waved its limbs. The mother looked into the fire. Again Olwen stood the baby upon her head where its curled feet were entangled in her hair; her eyes were towards the young man but not looking at him, though her thoughts might have been of him. Still turned towards him, she lowered the child to her knees and juttied her bright face forward, pouting her mouth for kisses while the child tried to take away one of her glistening teeth; then she let it down flat on her knees and buried her head in the laughing and quaking form. The young man's dark eyes fixed upon her grew more and more dark and sullen, with admiration for her, jealousy of the child, and indignation that she was so careless. She had not given him a glance. She sang, she talked, she laughed, she feigned to cry, she cooed, for the child. She allowed it to do as it liked and as nobody else had done except in thought. Her cheeks glowed with pleasure and exercise and thoughts unexpressed; the white skin of her brows and throat gleamed moist and whiter than ever; her grey eyes flamed softly. Never had she been happier and the happiness was at one with her beauty, so that a stranger watching might have thought that her happiness made her beautiful, or even that it was the consciousness of her beauty. She looked taller and her shoulders more massive than before, her back more powerful in the gentleness of its maternal stoop, her breast more deep, her dark voice more than ever the music of her noble body and blissful nature. Fit to be the bride of a hero and the mother of beautiful women and heroes and poets, she gave herself to the child.

Presently the child grew more silent, playing with a lock of her hair which now fell half over one shoulder down to her lap. She smiled musingly and caught the eye of her lover and began to tell him what she had been doing that day—how the manager had told her not to work so fast, and then asked her when she was to be married—but he remained silent. The child reared itself up by her hair and pulled at her chin and ears. She took no notice save to smile good-humoredly and shake her head, and continued to talk. Her two arms imprisoned the child; her head was raised in a pretence of keeping her chin from the enemy.

"Now, Caroline," she said, "you take a turn with baby and let me talk to John."

John stood up and came forward very slowly and very stiffly, and took the child from her arms. It began at once to cry and the mother, rising in a temper, carried it swiftly away, leaving the lovers silent.

John was the first to speak, saying:

"And what did you say to the manager, Olwen? Shall we get married this summer?"

"Yes," she said; "waiting is not much fun for you, John." And she gave him a kiss that he was too slow to return, so that she broke away, saying:

"And now I must take out these cakes. You light the lamp, John. Yes, come along, no nonsense. Bless me," she added, opening the oven door and letting out a smell as sweet as the first heat of May. "It's lucky



I wasn't a minute later. There! Take one while it's hot and don't burn yourself. Hot cakes and maids' lips, John."

And John split the cake in two and buttered it, and they ate the halves together.

EDWARD THOMAS.

## Letters from Abroad.

### THE POLITICAL TROUBLES OF SPAIN.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—The result of the General Election in Spain is pretty much what was expected, yielding, as it does, a precarious Liberal majority of about sixty. It is true, as a well-informed Spaniard observed to the writer a few days ago, that the general elections (which took place on Sunday, May 8th) were among the most legal ever held in Spain. Taken in conjunction with those which preceded them four years ago, they really seem to mark a permanent improvement in Spanish politics. The new Premier, Canalejas, deserves credit for his announcement, on the eve of polling, that the votes should be freely exercised, and that the Government would not employ pressure in order to secure the return of its own supporters. It would be a mistake, however, to exaggerate these signs of progress, for, from the point of view either of self-government or good government, Spain takes a lamentably low place among civilised countries. Even the recent elections were accompanied by many strange and disconcerting incidents. At Granada, for instance, where there was a large Republican majority, the Republican candidate's victory was officially disallowed, and a general strike followed, the shops being all closed by way of protest. Indifference and inertia are the besetting sins of the Spaniard, whose many fine qualities often lose effect simply because there is not enough energy to bring them into action. Out of four hundred seats, a hundred and thirty were uncontested, and most of those were distributed by the Government among its own supporters. The franchise is extremely democratic; every male citizen who has passed the age of twenty-three is entitled, and even compelled, to vote. But although he is bound to vote, he is not bound to vote for any particular candidate, and it is astonishing what a number of genuinely indifferent individuals vote "blanco," i.e., put their voting paper in the ballot-box without marking it. The blank vote usually denotes the blank mind, but it also testifies to the factions of Spanish politics; for the main parties, the Liberal and Conservative Monarchists, on the one side, and the Socialists and Republicans on the other, do not by any means exhaust the political ideas and emotions of modern Spain. Thus there are Carlists, scattered all over the Peninsula, who are as eager for the restoration of the Pretender as a Jacobite of eighteenth-century England and Scotland. The Carlists, indeed, are a small and diminishing group, yet there are those who think that circumstances might so shape themselves as to permit of a triumphant return of Don Carlos. The present heir lives in Venice, but he was travelling incognito in the South of Spain not very long ago, reviving the enthusiasm of his supporters by a series of judiciously-planned visits.

It is a curious fact that Spanish Governments are so short-lived, considering that the party which happens to be in office at the time of the General Election always contrives to secure a handsome majority. But the spirit of faction usually asserts itself quickly, for the main object of most professional politicians is some more or less tangible reward, and the spoils are miserably inadequate to satisfy the appetites and demands of the spoilers. There are not enough governorships of Provinces to go round, and even a short tenure of this office is said to be capable of providing the holder of it with a modest fortune. And so it happens that the chief of a group very soon falls a prey to the dissatisfaction of his supporters, who join the opposition and force him to resign office. The gifted Conservative

leader, Senor Maura, actually held office for more than two years, but this was an altogether surprising achievement, and such was the dissatisfaction, that he is said to have resigned before resignation became absolutely necessary, simply out of affection for the Royal Family and a desire to save the Monarchy. His successor held office for only a few weeks; but it is hoped that Senor Canalejas may be able to carry on for some time. He is generally thought to be, for the moment, the right man in the right place. The Conservatives tolerate him because, having recently married a devout Catholic, he is on good terms with the Court and the Church, while the Radicals, Socialists, and Republicans may be willing to give him a little rope on account of the root-and-branch speeches which he made in days of greater freedom and less responsibility.

Republicanism is remarkably strong in nearly all the Spanish towns, and it has allied itself with a crude and vehement Socialism. Poverty and unemployment are so universal that the idea of despoiling the Church and of dividing up wealthy estates can easily be made attractive by local orators. Spaniards say that the railways and other agencies have done something to remove provincial jealousies, though the differences between North and South are still well marked; but the Catalans are, if anything, more than ever bent upon Home Rule, and a Bill, not unlike that which Mr. Gladstone offered to Ireland, was actually drafted by the late Conservative Government of Senor Maura.

Strange to say, however, Senor Lerroux, the most popular politician of Barcelona, and a very stirring speaker, would subordinate Catalan Home Rule to Spanish Republicanism. Quite a number of candidates stood successfully under his banner, but there are said to be already signs that the popularity of this new cry is waning. The King is brave and well-meaning, and takes a fairly active interest in politics. The desirability of being on good terms at the Palace is recognised alike by Liberal and Conservative statesmen in Madrid, but, partly through training and natural instincts, partly from force of circumstances, the King leans for support on the Church and the Army. The support of the first is dangerous, of the second precarious. Some think that he might have become very popular after his exhibition of courage at the time of the Anarchist outrages had he made periodical visits to different parts of his kingdom, and won the affections of the leading towns by tactful appeals to local patriotism. His tours, however, have been mainly in search of sport to the country houses of the grandees, and, although he does not seem to have made any positive mistakes, his public character is too negative to command enthusiasm. In the opinion of those best qualified to judge, the tenure of the Spanish Monarchy is by no means secure.—Yours, &c.,

ENGLISHMAN.

Madrid, May 16th.

## Communications.

### THE ISSUE WITH THE LORDS.

II.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—The House of Lords, like most British institutions, wears a mask which conceals its real features. Its title, its long history, its rôle of once illustrious names, give to it, among imaginative and educated people, a certain prestige which is strengthened by the grosser snobbery of those who "dearly love a lord." Seen in this softening light, it may appear, even to outsiders, as it would seem to appear to most of its own members, to be an assembly of serene, impartial men, raised by their position above the temptations, the passions, and the errors of the masses, and offering to a distracted country its only refuge from the imminent dangers of democracy. It was thus, I confess, that I envisaged it myself in my green and idealistic youth; it is thus that it is being represented

in the Unionist Press; and it is thus that it presents itself to many people of the educated classes, who have been shaken, by the present crisis, from their habitual indifference to political issues.

This is the picture. But what is the reality? Of the 600, or so, hereditary peerages, the great majority are of recent creation. Not 100 can be traced back to the Middle Ages; nearly 300 date from the nineteenth century. The old aristocracy, which appeals to the historical imagination, is an increasingly insignificant element in the House. What preponderates is a new Plutocracy. Admitting, as everyone who knows admits, that the House contains men of ability and men of administrative experience, the fact remains that, in its essence, it is simply a house of rich men; and that many of these men, they or their ancestors, obtained their seats in the House because they were rich, and because they contributed, from their riches, to support the party which rewarded them with a peerage. This is the cardinal fact of the situation; for upon it depends that permanent bias of the House which is the cause of the present crisis. If there could have been any doubt as to the temper of the Lords previous to the Parliament of 1906, the events of that Parliament must surely have made the matter plain. On every important question in which they joined issue with the Commons, they appeared as the champions of privilege and vested right. They rejected the Education Bill in the interest of the Established Church; they rejected the Licensing Bill in the interest of brewery shareholders; they rejected the Scottish Land Bill in the interest of land-owners; they rejected the Plural Voting Bill in the interest of rich people in general; finally, they rejected the Budget in the interest of all who derive property from the labor of others without contributing labor of their own; sending to the polls a House of Commons which proposed to tax superfluous wealth, in the hope that a House would be returned which would tax the necessities of the mass of the people. This record is undeniable and unmistakable. It shows that the House of Lords, whatever else it may be, whatever eminence or wisdom may be gathered within its walls, is an embodiment of the spirit of Plutocracy; and that it will resist, by every means in its power, any modification, however gradual and cautious, of existing property relations. It would be idle to abuse the Lords for adopting this attitude; it is an attitude a House so composed is bound to adopt; and, no doubt, they act with a good conscience. I desire only to emphasise the fact that that is their attitude; and that it is that that brought them into conflict with the House of Commons in the last Parliament.

For while the House of Lords has been becoming "plutocratised" (if I may coin the word), the House of Commons has been becoming democratised. And the one process is causally connected with the other. Nothing is more striking than to note the change, since 1832, of the sources from which either House derives its support in the nation. At that date the House of Lords stood for the territorial aristocracy; while the great financial, manufacturing, and commercial interests were on the side of the Commons. On the other hand, the working-class held aloof from the reform movement, which they regarded, not without reason, as middle-class in its origins and aims. The working-class movement took the form of Chartism, and collapsed in 1848. The middle-class movement triumphed. Professional and business men obtained control of the House of Commons, and enjoyed that control, practically without challenge, until 1906. As in Rome, after the triumph of the Plebs, a new governing class came into being, representing a fusion of the old territorial and the new commercial magnates. From 1832 up to our own time, this class has controlled government and administration. But the general movement of society, operating in connection with our party system, compelled it to extend the suffrage, and, by democratising the House of Commons, to undermine the basis of its own supremacy. The process was resisted by the Lords, but the backbone of their resistance had been broken by the revolution

of 1832. They did not feel that they had sufficient credit with the country to make a serious stand; and, though there was friction between the Houses, there was never any doubt which House was, and was to remain, master. The election of 1906 changed all this. The gradual transformation of the Commons became suddenly and dramatically evident in its result. For the first time, there appeared in that House a strong party of Labor; and the Liberalism which was represented there in overwhelming majority displayed a quite new spirit. There was a serious determination to grapple with social evils, and to deal firmly with the vested interests which stood in the way of reform. Instantly, and inevitably, the House of Lords, unreformed and undemocratised, developed a new and unheard-of activity. It mutilated or rejected Bill after Bill sent up to it by the largest majorities on record since 1832, and ended by the revolutionary stroke of rejecting the Budget. The animus of the House is intelligible enough from its composition; the new and striking fact is its courage. But this, too, is easily explicable. The interests threatened in the Commons were now rallying to the Lords; and that House knew well that they had a stronger backing in the country than they could have commanded at any time since 1832. Many of the great interests, industrial and social, which supported the Commons at that date, have now gone over to the Lords. The City has gone over; the professions, largely, have gone over; villadom has gone over. And they have gone over, primarily, because classes, unrepresented then, are beginning to exert a real influence in the Commons. The present conflict, therefore, is not, as it was in 1832, a conflict between the nation and a territorial aristocracy; it is the first stage of the conflict between the people and vested interests. And in this conflict the House of Commons is not necessarily and always on the side of the people. For the interests that are supreme in the Lords are also enormously powerful in the other House. They have identified themselves with the Unionist Party, and the Unionist Party has identified itself with them. We ought, therefore, to speak, not of a conflict between the Houses, but of a conflict between the new Liberalism, associated with Labor, and the Plutocracy which dominates the House of Lords and one party in the Commons. Of the nature of that conflict, with your permission, I will say something further in a subsequent letter.—Yours, &c.,

G. LOWES DICKINSON.

## Letters to the Editor.

### "MAD SHEPHERDS IN ARCADY."

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—I have just been reading with interest "Curé de Campagne's" sympathetic review of Mr. Jacks's "Mad Shepherds" in your current number. In the review, and, I imagine, the book also, much is said about the melancholy of the English peasant. It is apropos of this, rather than of the whole review, that I ask some space of you for the defence of the peasant against this and the usually (but not in "Curé de Campagne's" case) accompanying charges, of aesthetic and intellectual dulness.

At this time, when all wise patriots are trying to make an industrial England realise her vital need of a re-established country folk, any word (even so kindly a one as your reviewer's) calculated to belittle in the public estimation the worth of those who remain to her, should not pass unchallenged. All the less because of a certain vogue there is just now for character-sketches, written by week-end enthusiasts for the country, which may well quench any regret for the extinction of the dully "quaint" types they portray. Such writing—and certainly neither Mr. Jacks nor his reviewer would ever produce such—is dangerously superficial. If the writers would stay a little longer out of town, they would soon be putting their cleverness to the



better task of showing their public what a worthy stock we still have to raise a peasantry from, and, by and by, to leaven with its innate country sense the immigrant mass from the cities.

That there is a good deal of glumness in the air of some of our villages no one knowing many of them will deny. But I do deny that it is universal. Considering that English countrymen are a vanishing race, against whom such various forces have fought and are still fighting in these days of industrialism, the glumness cannot be wondered at. The wonder is, rather, that there should be so much cheerfulness as there is among the survivors—the wonder and the fine significance—for this means a persistent physical virtue and spiritual strength of race that explains much history and inspires hope for the future.

"Curé de Campagne's" conviction about the melancholy of the peasant, no less than his appreciation of his religiousness, makes me wish he shared my good fortune in friendship among the folk of a certain Southern village, for I think that would modify the one and deepen the other.

The only advantages of the place are a lovely situation, a two miles distance from a railway station (and that station on an innocent branch line), and the existence of several long-established farms. The one big landlord remains for the most part only potential in the life of the place. Wages are low. For shepherd, this flock have an archaeological parson—kindly, but perhaps keener about flint arrow-heads than souls. I mention these facts lest any attribute the virtues of the people I am going to describe to special or model conditions, which certainly do not exist. It is round about very damp and ill-repaired cottages that they make their gardens such fruitful bowers, such joy for travellers; those are very small stores, as I know, that are so ready to supplement the smaller: but this does not hinder good neighborhood, nor shut the door on the wayfarer, nor spoil the kindly atmosphere which makes a sojourn there a very holiday of the heart.

Of course, there are black sheep, some hard drinkers, and a slattern or two, among his flock, but it is not they who give the place its tone. Among those who do are a hard-working dairyman and carrier and his little wife, bright and gentle both of them. They have no idea that I know how they secretly helped to keep an impoverished lady and two delicate children alive one winter with milk for which no bill was ever sent in. The shepherds, too, are very characteristic of the community: I know and like several—but one in particular. And that reminds me that Mr. G. K. Chesterton, who is so true-hearted that he ought to know better, recently wrote that certain occasionally-to-be-met-with "beery creatures drifting over the Downs" were the only survivals of the golden age of English shepherding. Regardless of racial and climatic possibilities, Mr. Chesterton lamented the earlier type, whom he seemed to picture as a mixture of a Theocritean shepherd and some piping, be-ribboned thing out of a Dresden china Arcady. Personally, I don't believe English shepherds were ever like that, and if they were, I like my shepherd better. He is, indeed, a good shepherd, and if he does not lay down his life for the sheep it is because there are no wild beasts demanding it. He certainly does not grudge it in their service; sometimes, in the bitter wintry lambing season, not changing his clothes for weeks together, and barely taking his sleep in his effort to save as many ewes and new-born weaklings as he may. He is never sure of having any free time even on Sundays; but he is a devoted husband and father, and a cheery, humorous fellow, and wise in Nature lore. A religious man, too, even though he must perform the public side of his religious duties by proxy in the punctual chapel and Sunday school attendance of wife and children. His wife always addresses him as Shepherd; and when I saw the comely woman in her tiny well-kept home among her flock of children—there are eleven of them, some at home, some in situations—I decided that she had earned her share of that honorable title, and called her Mrs. Shepherd. It is a notable thing in these days of physical decadence that all of Shepherd's children I have seen have handsome, merry eyes, clear skins, and benevolent smiles that show fine white teeth.

But first in my affection of all these friends stand Mr. and Mrs. S—. He is a seventy-year-old agricultural laborer, blinded in one eye of late, but still at work. From

his childhood he has got and kept the name of Jolly: young Jolly then, old Jolly now, and through all the hardships and troubles of his life, always Jolly. He is a great singer—and a sweet singer—of old country songs, not at all dreary so far as I have heard them, and sometimes, as in the case of "The Pirate of the Isle" and "The Plains of Waterloo," very rousing, indeed. In his youth, when they still danced on the green at Whitsun, he was a great fellow in the "Nut," the "Circassian Circle," and "The Triumph." Of the Morris dances he knows nothing. The first thing one notes in his wife are her blue eyes and the good smile which toothlessness cannot rob of benevolence; and, after that, one is quickly aware of high spirit and a twinkling humor. He and she have come through deep waters together, and she has to endure acute physical pain at times, but she can be just as merry as he, and at all times is not only happy, but radiates happiness. The secret of this is her unflinching faith, at once mystic and practical. Whether she cuts a cabbage or a joke, feeds the birds in winter, or the footsore tramp at her door, she does it with the will and blessing of God. One time I was admiring a photograph group of Mr. and Mrs. S—, and their family as children, and I asked for the names. She went through all and finished with, "and that's little Bessie, the one that was specially given." Why specially given? Only then for the first time I heard how a drunken father, decent enough to know he was unfit to keep his motherless little girl, brought her or brought them to rear her. "That was how we come to have little Bessie," said the old woman; "and she was always just one of our own. She's a happily married woman now, and her boy calls us Gran'dad and Gran'ma." This special gift was presented to them, be it told, when Jolly was earning 9s. a week, and bread was 9d. a loaf, tea 6d. for two ounces. But there seems never to have been any doubt in their minds as to who wanted them to take the neglected child into their brimming nest; nor, for all their toiling poverty, was she ever less than "specially given."

All of that bonny group are now out in homes of their own, but the mother is never without children. When she was a young servant maid she "got converted," she tells me. "Not in my present chapel—Congregational—but a Primitive Methodist; and the moment I was converted I knew, just as if I'd been told, that I must always look after poor little children." The little servant girl began a work then which the grandmother still carries on. She went, and still goes, round to all the big and well-to-do houses and begs for cast-off clothes; these she takes to pieces, washes, and re-makes into children's things, and sends away to an East End mission. I think one could have praised the kind thought—the begging and sending—but the laborious decency of the hard-working creature in washing and re-making is an added grace above praise, and one that puts the "ready-made-Christmas-bundle" charity of the well-to-do to some shame. In order to get the many garments ready, she often works till eleven o'clock at night, and thanks God heartily that her sight is not going quicker than it is. For the same mission, which includes a small hospital, she gathers and sends wild flowers in the spring and summer; and (this for the benefit of those who regret the dull wit of the English peasant) to any less well-known flower, such as the bee-orchis, fly-orchis, &c., she attaches a little label with its name.

Anyone knowing the good people of X—, and Mrs. S— in particular, would resent the oft-repeated fallacy that the English peasants' religion is always either gloomy, or narrow, or nil. I daresay one might find it hard to accept literally all the doctrine preached in her chapel; but I should like to share the faith in which she writes me (as she did last week, telling of another bout of agony): "But I do thank God for all my joys and all my sorrows and suffering." She always stoutly declares that nothing but good has ever come of suffering for her; and I don't see that the broadest-minded Anglicanism, nor most cultured Romanism, New Theology, Ethical Societism, nor even Christian Science with its indefatigable smile, could do more for her than that.

One of the worst fallacies of nice people with a literary appreciation of nature is that the unliterary countryman is unaware of the beauty he lives amongst. But old Jolly says he couldn't live and work away from "they hills." The window of their only sitting-room, a tiny kitchen parlor,



is not quite so big as Jolly's bandana handkerchief. Through it one looks across the road and a stretch of arable land to the Downs. "That's my picture," Mrs. S—— said to me the first time I called; "I do love it all times, in snow, too, or even rainy days. And there's a look it has—a bit later in the year—when the sheep's out on the hills and you can see the light shining through their fleeces and the beech trees are breaking into leaf in the coombe—well, I often says I'd give as much as ten shillings for a picture of it!"

She is a glad talker, but a great hater of evil speaking. Finding that she had had reason to know more than most about the ancient scandalous history of a great house of the neighborhood, a clergyman who was visiting the neighborhood questioned her about it. She seemed so disinclined to speak that he said at last, "There are some very queer stories, then?"

"Yes, sir," she said, with dignity, to this minister of the Gospel, "but I don't think they're worth talking about."

The same man, noting her cheery contentment, said he supposed she was very well off. "Oh, yes," she said; "my father has always looked after me well!"

"I suppose he was well to do, too? Who was he?"

"God Almighty's my father, sir." And here she told me with twinkling eyes how he got up and said, hurriedly, "Oh—ah! Good morning, Mrs. S——." "They 'spects us to sit all the time they're preaching," she laughed, "but they runs out pretty sharp if we gets up into the pulpit!"

It is very heart-warming to hear Mrs. Shepherd talk about Granny S—— and Old Jolly. She tells beautiful stories of the nursing of sick neighbors, of money help given, of loving counsel to the wilder sort of young people. And my friend, the dairyman, says no less: "They two people done more for this place than anybody," he says. Jolly's employer told me Jolly has never needed watching nor correction in his work in all the years he has worked for him: "He always was such an honorable man." And the vicar himself has high praise for the old people, and a real liking. He tells Granny S—— that he is keeping a seat warm for her in the parish church when she has done with her chapel. And they are the best of friends, though she answers him—laughing, yet serious—that that will never be.

I once intended to make a story out of these people, but cannot bring myself to submit these souls, so simply and richly expressing themselves in Christian living, to the elaborate and preciously attenuating methods of literature. I would rather quote them in this letter as proofs of what grand and lovable stock we still have among us, what fine roots to our nation if we will but let them bide in earth and have leave to grow and multiply.

There are some of us so sure of this that we want to preach a country crusade in high places—and low, too. We want to persuade some of the spiritual energy for ever pouring its wealth down the gutters of slumdom to come and liven our country churches and chapels. We want to give back to the country-side the work that was there for many before the machines stole it away, and the art that grew out of the work before industrialism slew it. We know too much history to claim that Merry England was ever ideal, but there's history in folk-song, folk-dance, and the ancient festivals, too, and it tells us that all the great crafts—ploughing, sowing, reaping, wood-cutting, smithing, spinning, and weaving—set men making songs about them, and left them fit to dance vigorously when work was over: that, if you give the English peasant his chance—his home and the hope of keeping his children on the soil, and the use of his hands amid the harshness and beneficence of Nature—he will contrive to be merry in due season, and pious, too.

With apologies for filling so much space,—Yours, &c.,  
MAUDE EGERTON KING.

May 17th, 1910.

#### A CONSTITUTION FOR EGYPT.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—In your issue of the 7th instant you publish an article on "A Constitution for Egypt." I beg your indulgence to make a few remarks upon it, as an old friend of Egypt. You pay a just tribute to the statesmanship of Lord Cromer and to his prudent advice to the Khedive to

wait until his people were better educated before giving them complete self-government. And, yet, although Sir E. Gorst has followed faithfully in the same policy, you blame him for doing so. You say justly: "What the Egyptians demand is primarily a 'Dostour,' a Constitution. It matters little what conservative checks might be imposed in the shape of an Upper House. The retention of English officials is perfectly possible. It is not even necessary that the British garrison should be withdrawn. . . . The formal grant of a Constitution would but consecrate what usage has assumed." Now, sir, it is not sufficiently known in this country that there exists in Egypt a large and constantly increasing class of natives who, so far from agreeing with the so-called "Nationalists," or feeling aggrieved by the continued British occupation, condemn the agitators of the native Press and rejoice in the security to public interests guaranteed by our presence. These form probably the majority of the population, for the fellahin appreciate fully the blessings of peace and justice which they have enjoyed through our influence. Last year there was formed in Cairo an association composed of a large number of influential Egyptians, landowners, capitalists, and industrialists who have important stakes in the country. It was called "The Egyptian Constitutional Party," and its objects were the reform of the existing Constitution and the maintenance of the *status quo* for twenty years longer, thus giving time for the steady development of the country and the growth of an experience of self-government through the municipal organisations in the cities and the provinces.

His Excellency Idris Pasha, the founder and President of the Association, is an intelligent and wealthy landowner who is an ardent patriot and a lover of peace. He is supported by a committee of well-known men of high standing in Egypt, who understand the real needs of their country and the prosperity which a peaceful future must secure to it.—Yours, &c.,

ARCHIBALD J. DUNN.

May 17th, 1910.

#### THE MEDICAL TREATMENT OF THE KING.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—My case so absolutely resembles that of our late beloved King that I venture to put in a plea for the view taken by your correspondent, "A Medical Practitioner," in to-day's (May 14th) NATION. I have suffered from emphysema and chronic bronchitis, with throat irritation and spasm (although I am not a smoker) for twenty years or more, and I have several times been at death's door with broncho-pneumonia. That I am here to-day, in my seventy-third year, is due, under the Providence of God, to skilful, sympathetic doctoring, devoted nursing of wife and daughter, and docile submission on the part of a usually rebellious subject.

I take my temperature every morning, and if it is over ninety-nine degrees I stay in bed and send for my doctor; and I have proved, beyond any doubt, the correctness of what your correspondent says: "It is in the early stages that complete rest for mind and body is of such vital importance." I never go out in winter, and only in summer when it is warm and genial, but not hot, as excessive heat sets up asthma and is bad for bronchitis. I am not a King, but a King's old servant, and I grieve that my old master should have gone down to the grave in the very zenith of his power and popularity.—Yours, &c.,

J. J. J.

May 14th, 1910.

#### FRENCH POLICY IN MADAGASCAR.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The election of M. Augagneur, Governor-General of Madagascar, as Deputy for Lyons, necessitates the appointment of a successor. This appointment is fraught with grave issues for the missions working in that island, three of which are English. The London Missionary Society began work there in 1820, and was followed, fifty years later, by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Friends' Foreign Mission Association. The French Roman Catholics, French Protestants, and Norwegian and

American Lutherans have also established missions in Madagascar.

General Gallieni, the first Governor-General of Madagascar (his predecessor, M. Laroche, who abolished slavery, was only Resident-General), began with strong prejudices against the Protestant Missions, but these melted away as he came in contact with the missionaries and saw the results of their work, so that he ended as their loyal supporter and friend. It has been quite otherwise with his successor, M. Augagneur. Since his arrival in the island, four years ago, he has pursued, not so much an anti-clerical, as an anti-religious, policy. It will be remembered that on reaching Marseilles last November he boasted of his success in diminishing the influence of the missionaries, whom he regards as the enemies of France and of the Malagasy. Yet if there be a historical fact beyond controversy with regard to Madagascar, it is that the missionaries have been the pioneers of civilisation and education in the island.

Already in 1907, in a remonstrance addressed to the French Colonial Minister by the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, it was pointed out that liberty of conscience was threatened by "une doctrine gouvernementale qui tend à transformer l'autorité de la France et l'influence de ses représentants en instruments de combat contre l'idée religieuse." In proof was quoted an article contained in the official organ of the Public Instruction department in Madagascar, entitled "Causerie à faire aux gens le Dimanche," in the Malagasy language, which openly attacked the idea of religion and argued against the existence of a God. Malagasy teachers in the official schools were recommended, and many of them have obeyed the recommendation, to give addresses on these lines in their schools. At the same time, the mission schools have been subjected to many oppressive regulations, amongst them being prohibition to hold a school in a church building, with the result that many thousands of children have been turned out of school and their education left unprovided for.

Not only is religious education hindered, but the elementary right of worshipping God according to one's conscience is denied. Recently, twelve persons, including a native pastor, were imprisoned for the crime of holding a religious service on Sunday morning in a private house, there being no place of worship in the locality, because the necessary permission to build one had been refused by the authorities.

The treaty by which Britain recognised the French Protectorate over Madagascar, and which prepared the way for annexation, contained a stipulation for full religious liberty. This stipulation has been grossly violated by M. Augagneur, though it does but carry out one of the fundamental principles of the French Republic, as emphatically declared afresh in the recent law for Separation of Church and State. The representations made by the missionary societies, both English and French, have hitherto produced no apparent effect. It will be hard to maintain the cordiality of our "entente" with France if this state of things is permitted to continue. Every true lover of France in the United Kingdom must hope that M. Briand's Government will avail itself of the present opportunity to send out to Madagascar a Governor who will respect the principle of religious liberty and France's treaty obligations with this country, and will reverse the anti-religious policy of his predecessor.—Yours, &c.,

JOSEPH G. ALEXANDER.

Tunbridge Wells, May 16th, 1910

#### THE BATTLE OF THE SCHOOLS IN FRANCE.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Poynter's letter on this subject in to-day's issue is the greatest possible tribute, if he only could see it, to the French Government. He quotes the official revision of a certain school book, the effect of the revision being to erase, as he says, all definitely Christian words and phrases from the book. Could any course be more just and fair, in a country where many of the people do not share the beliefs in question? Is the State to be neutral and aloof as regards all religions, or is it to show peculiar favor to that religion which happens to be most deeply rooted in the minds of a section? That, surely, is the question, in France and elsewhere.

Mr. Poynter evidently holds it unjust of a Government to omit Christian words, phrases, and teaching from its text-books. On what principle does he think so? Democrats have a principle—that of liberty of conscience, and religious equality, which forbids the State favoritism so evidently advocated by Mr. Poynter and his like. Democrats, of whatever creed, are pledged in principle to State neutrality in religion, and, therefore, to secular education.—Yours, &c.,

A. R.

May 14th, 1910.

### Poetry.

#### IN KINDERCOMBE.

WHEN ice and mire beset our ways,  
And fields are fens, and skies are gloom,  
I mind me of the happy days,  
Sweet, childish days in Kindercombe.  
For there were ever wont to wake,  
The first faint buds of timid spring,  
And there concealed amid the brake,  
The fledgeling thrush would try its wing.

Walled from the bitter north it lay,  
But took the sun on south and west,  
As if the zephyr's self would stay  
To fashion there its chosen nest.  
And set so thick with mighty trees,  
That nothing from above was seen,  
Save, shaken by the passing breeze,  
A tossing sea of foliage green.

Into this lovely solitude,  
With something of ingenuous shame,  
We, though a gay and boisterous brood,  
Abashed by so much beauty came.  
We ate our frugal meal in awe,  
With careful hands the crumbs were strown,  
And made ourselves a kind of law  
To speak but in an undertone.

For the great beeches overhead  
A ring of mighty giants seemed,  
Watching the young intruders tread  
The fairy land of which we dreamed.  
While underneath our charmed feet  
Great tufts of budding primrose grew,  
Violets and valley lilies sweet,  
And periwinkle's homely blue.

A little streamlet, clear and cool,  
Made music in that lonely place,  
And there in many a tiny pool,  
Sported the small, bright, silver dace.  
There in the sultry, noonday heat  
We played, each happy boy and girl,  
And laughed to see about our feet  
The little eddies flash and swirl.

Till like some elder sister, eve  
By falling dew and gathering shade,  
Told us the time had come to leave  
The beauties of our sylvan glade.  
So through the dusky lanes we passed,  
And underneath the starry dome,  
And by the highway, reached at last  
The lighted doorway that was "Home."

Father of Heaven! They were Thy gift,  
Those days of stainless happiness,  
And still, in hours of storm and drift,  
Come back once more to soothe and bless.  
That, in the garden of my heart  
Their gracious memory may be  
A temple sealed, and set apart  
Holy and pure, for Thine and Thee.

EDWARD S. TYLER.

## Reviews.

### JOHN CAM HOBHOUSE'S RECOLLECTIONS.\*

THESE two volumes cover the period from the year 1822 to the year 1834, and they are naturally far more interesting politically than the two volumes already published. They take us through the exciting days of the Reform Bill, and as Hobhouse went into office, though not into the Cabinet, in February, 1832, his Diary gives a lively record of the hopes and fears of Ministers. Hobhouse himself writes and speaks with singularly little enthusiasm. The question which we put to ourselves on reading the first two volumes—what was it that made Hobhouse a Radical?—is still unanswered at the end of the fourth volume. We get a fuller revelation of Hobhouse's nature, but that fuller revelation gives us no clue to the secret.

The chief event in the first volume is the death of Byron. Hobhouse was quite overwhelmed with grief, and in a little character sketch of Byron in his Diary, he says, "No man ever lived who had such devoted friends. His power of attaching those about him to his person was such as no one I ever knew possessed. No human being could approach him without being sensible of this magical influence. There was something commanding, but not overawing, in his manner. He was neither grave nor gay out of place, and he seemed always made for that company in which he happened to find himself. . . . He was full of sensibility, but he did not suffer his feelings to betray him into absurdities. There never was a person who by his air, deportment, and appearance, altogether more decidedly persuaded you at once that he was well born and well bred. He was, as Kinnaird said of him, 'a gallant gentleman.'" How completely Hobhouse himself was under Byron's spell is shown by the way in which he refers to the "gallant gentleman's" treatment of Mrs. Shelley. "He told Barry he was very anxious to get rid of the Hunt connection. Leigh Hunt was insolent enough to write a letter to Byron reproaching him with abandoning Mrs. Shelley, the widow of his (Byron's) best friend." To this Byron returned a short reply, telling Hunt that "as for Shelley his name was unnecessarily introduced; that Mrs. Shelley had no claim on him; and that as for him (Hunt) he had only to regret that he had ever communicated so much with him, as he had thereby lost not only his money but his character." This letter he read to Barry, and sent it. "I now account for the animosity of Hazlitt to Byron. He takes his cue from crony Hunt. Barry told me that Medwin got most of his anecdotes from Shelley." Hobhouse appears to have thought that as long as Byron looked the "gallant gentleman" he could behave as brutally as he liked.

Hobhouse was like Byron in being very sensitive and self-centred. As a consequence, his diary is not the diary of a happy man. He is continually wondering whether he is a success, feeling that his generation does him less than justice, and disliking the particular circumstances of his life at the moment. Added to all these disturbing causes, he is haunted by the horror of death, a feeling that betrays itself, not so much in what he says about himself as in what he says about others. We can imagine how much a man of so sensitive a nature suffered in the situation described in the following passage in his Diary:—

"I dined at Mr. Whitbread's. Came to the House of Commons. Found a discussion on the Chancery question going on. Peel and Wetherell made foolish speeches, and angered me, so though no one would speak after two of ours, I must needs rise and declaim against the Lord Chancellor's political conduct. This was all well enough, but I made some confusion about the measure which I thought had something to do with the Chancery Amendment Bill of the Master of the Rolls, whereas it was only a motion for certain papers by D. W. Harvey. Under this impression I asked why the Master of the Rolls was not there to defend his Bill, and this I repeated and commented upon. When I sat down Canning got up and said it was rather hard in me to expect him to be answerable for the Master of the Rolls, and added probably he had been, as it seemed I had been, more agreeably employed. A great laugh arose, of course, and I began now to see that my friends and

the public thought me drunk, which I was not, nor was flustered, for I had drunk nothing at Whitbread's. Canning, however, did not press me unfairly, I must say, and concluded his speech very shortly. I felt very uncomfortable, and went home. Scarcely slept a wink."

In 1833 he became Secretary for War, and it is not surprising that he found his office uncongenial, for his proposed reforms provoked great opposition from the soldiers, and Lord Grey did not allow him much freedom. Hobhouse had taken an active part as a private member against flogging in the Army, and when in office he would only say that his opinion was unchanged; that all the authorities he had consulted were on the other side, and that as he did not frame the Mutiny Bill, he could not help the continuance of the practice. He was very conscious of the weakness of his position, but he managed to do something in administration to check the practice. He had the satisfaction of hearing from the Swedish Minister that discipline had improved in the Swedish Army with the abolition of flogging. In March, 1833, he escaped from what he called "his odious office" to the Irish Secretaryship, but in May he resigned because he felt that his declarations to his constituents made it impossible for him to vote against the Repeal of the House and Window duties. Hobhouse resigned both his office and his seat for Westminster, but unfortunately his constituents misunderstood his honorable conduct, and when he stood again for re-election he was beaten by 152, after a contest in which he was subjected to violent treatment. This experience was enough to sour a more contented man, and Hobhouse had known few contented moments since his entrance into public life. Next year he became a Commissioner of Woods and Forests in Melbourne's Government, with a seat in the Cabinet. He found a constituency at Nottingham, where he had a majority of 1,625. "The decision was announced in silence, when the patriot, Eagle, (his opponent) exclaimed, 'What, not a greasy ruffian to throw up his hat?' "He, the day before, had called my supporters 'ragamuffins,' and said that nine-tenths of them were drunk. I believe one-twentieth of them were so; and my impression then was, that although the whole constituency was far inferior to that of Westminster, yet there were two or three hundred highly-spirited, independent men, as intelligent and well-mannered as any to be found in the kingdom." The fourth volume, unfortunately, closes within a few weeks of his becoming a Cabinet Minister.

Hobhouse and Burdett represented the Radical Left in the House of Commons, and it is therefore interesting to note their relations with the popular movement outside and their opinion of the disturbances. They were both unsympathetic with the working-class movement; Hobhouse deplored Burdett's weakness in allowing himself to be drawn into the National Union, and Burdett said "the more he saw, the more he was convinced there was no having to do with anyone except gentlemen, i.e., men of education." Hobhouse was put out with Grey for receiving a midnight deputation of Radicals. In November, 1830, there are these two entries in the Diary: "November 25.—I had a long talk with Burdett about the state of the country. He is for strong measures, such as declaring the counties out of the King's peace, re-enacting the Alien Act against foreigners who are supposed to be at the bottom of the burnings, &c. And, above all, arm the householders." . . . "November 29.—I had a long talk with Place on the state of the country. He thinks a revolution inevitable. The farmers of Kent and Sussex have for the most part acceded to the demands of the laborers, and will pay so long as they can. When they cannot, the parson and the landlord will be obliged to contribute. The first will be treated with the least ceremony." These disturbances were the agrarian fires of the winter of 1830. The allusions to the actual Reform agitation itself are extremely interesting, though sometimes rather perplexing. We will set out some of them in their chronological order:—

"1830. June 19. Talking with Attwood of Birmingham, who seemed to think that popular associations might procure Reform if contending for moderate measures upon 'conservative principle.' He said he was convinced that the whole people of England was essentially aristocratic, and imbued with respect for their superiors, and hatred of those neighbors raised by accident above themselves. I believe this is true."

"1831. Jan. 18. Dined at Warre's. . . . Sir R. Inglis there. He seems to think all our troubles, and amongst them the cry for Reform, will subside quietly, and the old Tory

\* "Recollections of a Long Life." By John Cam Hobhouse (Lord Broughton). With additional Extracts from his Private Diaries. Edited by his daughter, Lady Dorchester. In 4 vols. Vols. III. and IV. Murray. 24s. net.



principles and practices finally prevail. If he should turn out to be right, what blunders we are."

"1831. April. Andrews, the Bond Street bookseller, told me that Lord Sidmouth had been with him to know the feelings of those in his class of life, and his lordship would not believe that the majority of them were not against the measure."

"1831. Dec. Burdett told me our Reform prospects were not favorable—no converts. The King against, so far as inclination went, but being an honorable man, would not give in. He said that the National Union was fast going to pieces, and so much the better, added he."

Burdett's dislike of the popular agitation was shared by Hobhouse, who says in one place that if death is ever justified as a punishment, it was justified in the case of the rioters at Nottingham and Birmingham, and in another, that he did not like the looks and manners of the crowds. He was hurt because a shoemaker in Bond Street refused to take down a placard with this inscription: "199 versus 22,000,000."

One of the most surprising of contemporary impressions is recorded in this extract:—

"1832. Jan. 26. This day I had a long talk with Frank Place, who told me that when the Lords threw out the last Bill there was so little feeling or spirit in the people that it required all the efforts of a few individuals to found the National Political Union, and that the Birmingham Union was just kept alive by the subscription of three men, who sent £50 apiece and saved it. He said that even now the National Political Union was mere moonshine, and the Birmingham the same. He added that a vigorous Tory Ministry would keep the people down easily for some time, but that they would rise at last and walk over all the upper classes."

A few months later Place talks in a very different strain:—

"May 19, Saturday. I went to Place. He told me that there would positively have been a rising if Wellington had recovered power yesterday. Everything was arranged for it; he himself would not have slept at home."

A study of Hobhouse's temper during these exciting times prepares us for such an entry as this in January, 1834:—

"I had letters inviting me to stand for Bridgewater, East Somerset, Marylebone, Devizes, and one or two other constituencies. I answered uniformly, 'Yes, but on my own terms; no canvassing, no pledges, no promising, no lying.' Being a party to the passing of the Reform Bill as a final measure (so far as we were concerned), I never could support any essential change of that great measure, and would sooner remain out of Parliament all my life than adopt that sort of politics."

And Hobhouse had been the ultra-Radical bogey of the respectable Tories.

The moods and fluctuations of the Ministers with regard to the measures to be taken to carry the Reform Bill, and the creation of Peers, are portrayed in conversations of Durham, Althorp, Holland, and Howick. Durham's comments, as one would expect, are very bitter. Most of Hobhouse's conversations were with Althorp, who, when talking of urgency as a way of ending his difficulties, was rudely confronted by Hobhouse with this dilemma:—

"I told him that 'he never could go out as he came in, for that, if it was generally suspected he might have carried the measure, and would not do it, he would be stoned in the streets; and if the other party came in, I saw no small chance for his coming to the scaffold.' He smiled, and said, 'I think so too; I have long thought so.'"

There are two entries about the creation of Peers that are particularly interesting at this moment. One occurs after the Second Reading of the Bill in the Lords, when the defeat of the Bill in Committee was imminent:—

"May 7. 1832. I went to the House of Lords, and heard that Lyndhurst had proposed to take the enfranchisement clauses of the Bill before the disfranchisement clauses; and that Lord Grey had declared such a course would be fatal to the Bill; that Lords Harrowby, Wharcliffe, and others had declared in favor of Lyndhurst; and that Ministers would be in a minority of 20 or 25 at the least. Nothing was more unexpected than this news. A great many friends supposed that a creation of peers was now inevitable; indeed, even the other side held the same language, and seemed afraid of their certain victory."

The other interesting passage is an entry in July, 1833, which shows that the idea of creating Peers in that year, in order to enable the Government to carry their Irish Church Bill, was under consideration.

Hobhouse had no literary charm, but his diary, apart from its political interest, contains some good stories. Here is a lively passage:—

"February 24, 1827. Baillie called and brought with him Mr. Wolff, the converted Jew, who had been four and a half years in the East, attempting to convert the Jews. . . . At

Constantinople he converted 500 Jews, but he only induced them to renounce the old law, not to become decided Christians. At Jerusalem he was not so fortunate. He discovered that the Jew he converted there was anxious only to get money to buy old clothes, but he there saw a very learned Jew, Rabbi Mendel, who when he was told by Wolff that by becoming a Christian he would gain peace, took him to a window and showed him Mount Calvary, 'on which,' said he, 'you see the monastery where Armenians, Catholics, and other Christians are daily quarrelling, and would exterminate one another, were it not that the sword of the Mussulman preserves some order among them.'"

#### A DYING EMPIRE.\*

It is at the best a romantic pity which Europe bestows on the dying peoples, whom modern armies are destroying for the benefit of modern financiers. Let a Nationalist Party but call itself "young," and it will have its admirers and its advocates. But of the dying we think already with that apathy and musing which is in our thoughts the portion of the dead. The Moors, who made so gallantly their last stand in the hills round Casablanca, are hardly more real to us than their forefathers, who fell in the conquest of Granada, or the Aztecs whom Cortes enslaved. Sympathy is for our contemporaries, and we have no contemporaries among the dead. One reads this really vivid book by Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett much as one reads the narratives of the Conquistadores. The French and Spanish soldiers, the financiers and the diplomatists behind them, these certainly are real men to our thoughts. But these shadowy Emperors, these heroic Red Caid, these unrealised tribes move fitfully out of the darkness of a past existence into the momentary illumination of naval searchlights and bursting shells, and return to it again. We see them almost with the bodily eye as this book recounts travels and battles round Casablanca and Melilla, or an even more interesting sojourn in Fez. But they are never wholly real to us. The reason is, perhaps, the odd detachment of Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett's attitude. His sympathies are, on the whole, with the Moors. He exposes very quietly, and, as a matter of course, the wrongs which they have suffered. But he is as far as possible from adopting a Quixotic attitude. While he follows the French or the Spanish forces in the field, he makes their fortunes and their interests his own. He joins in the race for mining concessions, which supplies the motive for the scramble for Morocco. The whole process is to him inevitable, natural, a day in the world's work, and he takes his share in it, something in the spirit of the pious Mohammedan butcher, who prays as he fells his ox, "God give thee strength to endure this thy great trial."

In its main outlines this book confirms the impressions derived from the daily press while the Civil War and the French and Spanish Campaigns were in progress. The fallen Sultan, Abdul Aziz, whom the author met on two occasions, is represented, indeed, as an amiable and even intelligent prince, pitifully weak and incompetent, but not without the two redeeming qualities of humour and physical courage. He wanted to be an ultra-civilised monarch, but, unluckily, his conception of civilisation was confined to bicycles and billiard-tables and cocktails. One remembers Mr. Cunninghame Graham's picture of the Moorish army about to cross a river in its march. In the distance appears a camel bearing a grand piano on its back. Guns and horsemen, infantry and commissariat, are all halted in their advance. The piano is unpacked, and the Sultan with one finger picks out on its keyboard a music-hall air. Then at last the march is resumed, and the piano left solitary and abandoned in the desert. It was against his childishness, his impiety, and his subservience to the French that the subjects of Abdul Aziz revolted. Of Moulai Hamid, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett draws a favorable picture. He has courage, and, what is much more unusual in a Moor, unbounded energy and the power of organisation. There is something impressive in the description of his systematic efforts to give some sort of structure once more to a dilapidated Empire. Messengers were for ever going out to this disaffected tribe and that revolted city; new Governors and Caid were named, and tribute levied with surprising ingenuity to fill the war-chest of the Nationalist Sultan.

\* "The Passing of the Shercofan Empire." By Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett. Blackwood. 15s. net.

Moulai Hafid, by the torture and assassination of his domestic enemies, has earned the name in Europe of a peculiarly bloody and cruel despot. But in what he did he was acting according to the recognised Moorish standards. Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett asks us to believe that for a Moor he is not a cruel man. It is a singularly callous world. One picture which he draws lives in the memory. It is the parade ground at Fez. A local preacher, who had written in favour of a Holy War and against the new Sultan, is having the palms of his hands cut open, salted, and sown up with leather, so that they will grow together. Fugitives from justice are clinging to the mouths of the cannon, which in Morocco are a sort of sanctuary, and shouting to attract the Sultan's notice. In another corner the soldiers are flogging defaulting comrades prostrate on the ground. The band plays the "Cock of the North" and the "British Grenadiers." Seated against the wall are the Sultan's Cabinet Ministers, some chatting, some writing, and others peacefully asleep. The Diplomatic Corps awaits the Imperial pleasure, while the Sultan himself chats with three favorites of his Harem.

A good half of the book is filled with full and accurate accounts, written with much expert knowledge, of the two European campaigns. Soldiers will read them with profit, and civilians will turn with interest to the chapters which sum them up. Of the Spanish Army, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett's report is what every historian's has been since Macaulay said of its operations in the seventeenth century that it was invariably more embarrassing to its allies than to its enemies. The material is good. The little peasant infantrymen are hardy, patient, and brave. But the higher officers lack science and energy. The regimental officers indulge too often in a curious system of peculation at the expense of their men. The training is inadequate and much too brief. The marksmanship both of the infantry and of the artillery is beneath contempt. The army, in short, in its present condition is a negligible quantity from the European standpoint. Of the French, on the other hand, whose operations in the Chaouia campaign he followed, the author writes with an almost unqualified enthusiasm. The spirit of the men, their keenness, their discipline, their gaiety and resourcefulness, their endurance, their power of marching, and, of course, their dash and courage, are to-day what they have always been when a French Army was itself. Their organisation, their material, and their commissariat deserve an almost unvarying praise. Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett has, indeed, only one criticism which is at all serious—that their training has been carried to that point of perfection at which it tends to paralyse and render mechanical—and even this criticism is probably applicable rather to the Colonial infantry and the Foreign Legion, which are a professional long-service army, than to the conscripts who form the mass of the home forces. His general conclusion, we are afraid, is only too likely to encourage the ambitions of the French Colonial group. It is that the conquest of Morocco presents no serious military difficulty. The tribesmen, indeed, have lost none of their old bravery. Their cavalry charges were magnificent, and their tactics were often as admirable as their chivalric courage. One lesson of the campaign—that the deadliness of artillery in checking a skilful and determined cavalry charge has been much exaggerated—tells in their favor. Yet the superiority of modern arms and discipline is so overwhelming that even on the defensive and in a guerilla war the Moors would not be formidable. Their marksmanship is surprisingly bad, and even when they possess modern rifles it is now impossible for them to obtain adequate supplies of ammunition. The risks of conquest would begin after it was complete. The question for the French to consider is simply whether they could afford to detach from their home army the forces which would be required to hold the country down. The Germans, when they made up their minds to tolerate what is in effect an unlimited French protectorate, in return for a share in developing the mineral wealth of Morocco, were doubtless satisfied that the task of garrisoning a difficult country and policing its warlike tribes would permanently weaken the position of France as a European Power.

The conclusion of the book is wholly pessimistic. In spite of the energy of Moulai Hafid and the courage of his

tribesmen, in spite of German backing, in spite even of the incredible mistake which the French made in allying themselves with Abdul Aziz against all that was vital and self-respecting among the Moors, it is French policy that has won. The new Sultan, though he seized the throne as a protest against European interference, has been forced to accept the burden of a crushing debt, to mortgage his revenues, to receive French instructors for his army, and French inspectors for his finances, and to sign away to French syndicates the natural resources of his country. How ruthless in detail, as well as in conception, French policy has been, these chapters bear witness. We shrink from reproducing Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett's story of the bombardment and capture of Casablanca. It confirms to the full the accounts from European residents which appeared at the time in the columns of THE NATION. The bombardment was a perfidious and hot-headed brutality, wreaked upon a submissive town which its native rulers had already reduced to order. Worse even than the bombardment was the massacre of men, women, and children which the blue-jackets carried out at their first landing. The moral of this record would seem to be that a modern European nation, if it is well armed, may dispense alike with ethics and diplomacy, and yet succeed. This is not an edifying, but it is an interesting, book.

#### OUR PARISH REGISTERS.\*

THE earlier volumes of this series have been successful in proportion to their adherence to those limitations which are definitely implied in the general title. The late Professor Maitland did, indeed, combine a hawk's eye for details with a philosopher's outlook over the whole of medieval life; but to the antiquary, in general, we are most grateful when he frankly abandons the broader issues of history. This rule has not always been followed in earlier volumes of "The Antiquary's Books," where (to quote only three instances) we find the authors wandering off into such startling mis-statements as that St. Clare was the sister of St. Francis, that clandestine marriages were invalid in pre-Reformation England, and that the modern apologetic view of duplicate relics is consistent with medieval facts. Nor does Dr. Cox, who, as editor, has tolerated such aberrations in others, stick in this latest volume to his own last. He, too, is not only naively unsympathetic to certain modern ideals, but even ignorant of many essential medieval facts. For instance, he makes an entirely gratuitous onslaught upon one of our few church historians whose work shows an intimate knowledge of the episcopal registers:—

"A learned Canon of the Church of England," he writes, "who has taken a considerable share in a recent church history in several volumes, has made the strange blunder of stating that English medieval bishops must have neglected the rite of confirmation, because there is hardly ever any reference to this sacrament in the extant episcopal registers!"

A sentence of this kind is thoroughly unsatisfactory to the general reader, who would like to know at least the names both of the writer here attacked and of that other of whom we learn only that, being "one of the fairest of our historians," he takes the same view of Henry VIII. as Dr. Cox does (p. 13). Only those who happen to have read the books thus obscurely indicated will recognise this latter historian as Dr. Gairdner (who would himself claim rather diligence and honesty than the special glory of impartiality here assigned to him), and the former as Canon W. W. Capes ("History of the English Church in the 14th and 15th Centuries," p. 229). Moreover, Dr. Cox does great injustice both to Canon Capes, whom he misquotes, and to the reader, whom he misinforms. The Canon plainly states that confirmation was often neglected in the Middle Ages because "there was little rule or method"—a fact incidentally corroborated by the silence of the registers, but well known to historical students from other plain evidence. Apart from the indirect testimony of Eadmer, William of Malmesbury, and Grosseteste, there is the *locus classicus* quoted even in Wakeman's popular "Church History"—Archbishop Pecham's complaint in 1281 of the "numberless people grown old in evil days who had not yet received the grace of con-

\* "The Parish Registers of England." By Dr. J. C. Cox ("The Antiquary's Books.") Methuen. 7s. 6d. net.

firmation." Again, Dr. Cox should have known that the snobbery for which he ponderously belabors post-reformation registrars (pp. 24, 52 ff.) was really only a mild survival from medieval conditions, when church laws forbade seats or burial in the chancel to all laymen but the patron, and when custom sometimes kept an entire parish waiting whole hours for mass until the great man should arrive. Here, again, Dr. Cox is probably misled by one of his contributors, who in a former volume of this series has made very gross misstatements as to the equality of all men within the walls of the medieval church. On other points, such as the taxing of sacraments (p. 4), astrology (p. 41), baptism by midwives (p. 56), clandestine marriages (p. 94), it is misleading to say as much as he does without adding also that all these things were medieval survivals. Again, we cannot suppose that Dr. Cox really imagines Henry VIII. to have been the first English king who burned for heresy; yet he very definitely gives the reader to understand this on p. 118. Similarly on p. 250 he implies that the clerical title of "Sir" was confined to priests. It was, in fact, often given to clerics in lower orders, and has survived in the *Ds* of Cambridge class-lists. Lastly, the facsimile on p. 238, which Dr. Cox gives as if it were in a contemporary hand, is evidently of later date—probably of 1596 (see p. 237). And here, as in preceding volumes, the inaccuracies are rendered more serious by the lack of adequate references. Dr. Cox, though far more lavish of footnotes than his colleagues, has yet given us only twenty-one in 259 pages, and nine of these simply pass us on to other writings of his own. Nor is this lack of vouchers atoned for by a scrupulous accuracy in smaller matters. On the contrary, his Latin is conspicuously faulty. It would be difficult to find any passage of three or four lines without at least one mistake, and on pp. 129-130 we have counted six in seven consecutive lines. In many of these cases, he had correctly-printed matter to copy from; but most of the false Latin occurs in the passages which are apparently of his own transcription. In some cases the text given in this book makes absolute nonsense, as the author must have discovered if he had imitated some of his predecessors and supplied translations for the general reader's sake.

But we must not linger too long over the shortcomings of this book, though we have felt compelled to enter a definite protest against the bias and frequent inaccuracy of the series in general, and against such flattering verdicts as we read in the prospectus: "For the accuracy of [this book] Dr. Cox's name on the title-page is a sufficient guarantee." If we have the best of reasons for demurring here, we are yet glad to testify how much entertainment and mild instruction the author supplies when he can refrain from trying to persuade us that the Romanists executed under Elizabeth suffered "solely for their religion," and that marriage with a deceased wife's sister is "civilly legalised sin." The first chapter describes the registration system started by Thomas Cromwell in 1538, and rendered unpopular by its supposed connexion with Protestantism. The third chapter deals with the successive religious changes under Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, as mirrored in the registers. Fortunately for posterity, many clergymen have used these books, not only for the bare records of births, deaths, and marriages, but for chronicling many other facts and sentiments, often of considerable interest. At Much Wenlock, for instance, the incumbent records at great length his sympathy with the ejected monks, and gives a charming portrait of one of them; he throws up his cap with great enthusiasm for Queen Mary in 1553, but accepts Elizabeth very contentedly in 1558. He embroiders his formal entries with delightful additions, e.g.:—

"1543-4, Feb. 21.—Here was buried out of the Almshouses John Treasingham, Cheshire man born, an aged lame man, for on Saturday before his departing, he said unto me, Sir Thomas Butler, Vicar of the Church of the Holy Trinity of Moch Wenlock, that he was of the age of seven score years, and I said it could not be so, and he was, as he said, of the age of four score years at the Battle of Blower Heath, and since that, there were three score years (count altogether said he, and ye shall find seven score years, rather more than less), and said also that some time he was servant to the old Sir Gilbert Talbot, Knt., at the manor of Blakemore beside Whitechurch."

It is, indeed, these personal additions which form the real interest of the parish registers. The parson of Staplehurst,

recording the birth and christening of his own daughter, Mary, in 1549, is careful to record the fact that the child is born "of his lawful wife Jane . . . married the year before," which affords a lively comment on Cranmer's contemporary visitation-article, "Whether any do contemn married priests." Another incumbent, in 1730, notes that Robert Thompson had been wrongly baptised in peril of death, "the midwife mistaking the sex, *ebrietas dementat*." The parson himself was sometimes puzzled at deformities unforeseen by the rubrics. The entry of the deaf-and-dumb bridegroom in 1576 is too good to curtail: we must refer the reader to p. 84. In 1832, again, Christopher Newsam married Charity Morrell, who, having no arms, had the ring placed on the fourth toe of her left foot, and wrote her name in the register with her right. The parson of Condover, recording the burial in 1671 of a man after his own heart, adds, "Help Lord for good men decay!" This being before the Great Revolution, to which (as we know) Gibbon's kinsman, Acton, attributed the decadence of English physique, we may perhaps find the explanation in an almost contemporary entry from Ashbourne, where a physician of the greatest moral and professional excellence died prematurely of "the Gout (with which he was much troubled) striking up to his Stomach, and that occasioned (as was supposed) by eating Cowcubers and fruit." The registers record many conditions half-forgotten or altogether unknown to the present generation, such as the laws for burial in woollen, the statutory obligations (quite apart from canonical injunctions) to keep certain fasts, the custom of marriage in a smock to get rid of pre-contracted debts, and the abuse of arresting the corpses of insolvent debtors. Not infrequently the clergyman points a moral with his burial entry, e.g.:—

"1562 (*Dorking, Surrey*). Feb. 23.—Owyn Tonny was christened; who" (a later hand adds) "scoffing at thunder, standing under a beech was stroke to death, his clothes stinking with a sulphurous stench, being about the age of twenty years or thereabouts."

"1660.—Dorothy Matly, supposed wife of John Flint, of this parish, foreswore herself; whereupon the ground open [*sic*], and she sank over head March 1st; and being found dead she was buried March 2d."

For a fuller account of this last tragedy, in such winged words as few English prose-writers have commanded, we must refer the reader to p. 134 of Dr. Cox's book, or to Bunyan's "Life and Death of Mr. Badman," from whence it is quoted. We had marked several similar passages for citation if space had permitted; but we must at least spare a passing reference to that serpent as big as a horse, which had killed more than a thousand people, and is recorded by the registrar of St. Nicholas at Durham to have been there exhibited in 1568 (p. 232). We hope we have already quoted enough to show that Dr. Cox's book, though without strictly scientific pretensions, contains much interesting antiquarian gossip.

#### TRAVEL PICTURES.\*

THE irresponsible temperament, however deserving of censure, has, at all events, one merit—it is extremely rare. Throughout the universe, as moralists are never tired of pointing out, the spirit of conformity reigns supreme. There is no anarchy in the vegetable kingdom; revolt is rare among minerals; the butterfly goes about its business urged by a sense of duty no less binding than that which preserves even the comet from caprice. From the standpoint of frivolity, the cosmos, indeed, is a depressing spectacle. Small wonder that man, stung by its intolerable rectitude, should break every now and then his iron chains and set law at defiance.

Mr. Tickner Edwardes is a revolutionary in peripatetics, whose object of detestation is the common highway. "Walking on main roads," he complains, "is an intolerable thing. You are always being reminded of your journey's end. You are always coming upon great stretches of blank thoroughfare ahead—straight Euclid lines of vacuity that appal tired feet." Bye-laws, on the other hand, hoodwink progress and reveal the future only "in brief alluring

\* "Lift-Luck on Southern Roads." By Tickner Edwardes. Methuen. 6s.

"Tramps in Dark Mongolia." By John Hedley. Unwin. 12s. 6d. net



glimpses." "You are never getting anywhere. You are always there where you want to be, until unexpectedly you find yourself somewhere else just as pleasant." Thus, in no particular direction and with plenty of time to spare, Mr. Edwardes wanders along very happily through a large number of pages, often pausing on the road to analyse his sensations, chat to a passer-by or count the petals of a wayside flower. The result is a book of flickering pleasantness, some careful observation, and no great depth. Endowed with a certain knowledge of nature as well as an impressionability to its moods, Mr. Edwardes is better, we think, in his descriptions of purely natural objects than in his sketches of rustic character. The peasant must be lived with and deeply understood before he can be revealed on paper; a quarter of an hour's conversation on the road, a few confidences over the tea-cups, serve to produce an outline that is fairly accurate, but an outline and no more. Mr. Edwardes's mistake, however, is in leaving the sphere of observation, where he is at home, for the more ambitious realms of imagination, where he inevitably goes astray. Here, for instance, is a description of an autumn morning which conveys something definite to the reader:—

"Coming away from Slumberwell on that silent blue-and-gold morning, the fancy that Nature was still in her wide-awake, strenuous mood of the night before, was borne in upon me at every step. A dead calm brooded everywhere. The sunbeams poured steadily down on a landscape that was all smiling peace and quietude. Bees hummed in the wayside blossoms, and the birds kept up a cheery chorus far and near in the woods. But the sky held none of this tranquillity. It was more like a battlefield strewn with the wreck and violence of the night, where, scattered and beaten, the old feuds still smouldered fiercely. . . . It was as if the war-sated earth was crying peace, peace, when there was no peace. . . . Twisted, torn rags of mist were caught in the hollows of the Black Downs. Behind them, a glowering rampart of inkly cloud made another horizon just as solid as the hills. Yet it was not the thunder-charged character, the declared vehemence and velocity of the sky, that so strangely moved me. It was the fact that all the clouds still retained their careering minatory look, though utterly spent and driven to a standstill. Vast black cumulus, and lurid streamer, ragged peak beyond peak, tumbling together in panic-stricken rout—it was all petrified into an almost horrifying stillness, that gave the lie to the placid sunshine and the dreamy quiet of meadow and song-haunted wood."

Later on, we are given a dialogue between the writer and a love-sick youth whom he encounters in a wood, and a further interview with the object of the young gentleman's affections whom Mr. Edwardes woos vicariously with the assistance of a crystal ball, which is as false to nature as the first quoted is true. The episode is thoroughly conventional, and a bad blot on a book which relies for its success on the sincerity of a first-hand impression. We trust Mr. Edwardes when he tells us about cloud effects, or describes an owl devouring a small bird, but he must forgive us if we say that the accounts both of "Clara" and the "Archangel" carry no conviction whatever.

"Tramps in Dark Mongolia" is an instance of the fact that the virtues of one calling may be the vices of another. Mr. Hedley is a missionary, and we feel sure a good one, but it would be sacrificing truth to merely moral considerations to say that he were anything but an indifferent artist. It may be that the path of rectitude conflicts with nature's curve, or that the eye intent on the inward and spiritual is apt to misread or overlook externals, but the result on the reader's mind is that Mr. Hedley is hardly the man to write a *Riesebilder*. The book contains abundant detail but hardly any design, and of the mass recorded very little indeed can be retained. Perhaps the clearest impressions are those relating to phenomena in which Mr. Hedley's interests are most naturally engaged. The religious rites of the Mongolians are described with deep feeling and considerable accuracy. Readers curious as to the worship of Buddha should turn to page 137 and read the account of a ceremony conducted by four Lamas, in which a teapot containing water and a dish of millet play a prominent part. The water and grain have apparently a sacramental virtue, and are consumed in a spirit which Mr. Hedley tells us is peculiarly solemn and devout. To attribute divine qualities to purely natural objects is an excess of superstition that rouses all Mr. Hedley's missionary spirit: "I tried," he says, "in a few sentences to show how unnecessary all this is." But the Mongols, unhappily, were not convinced. Such are some of the difficulties which a

follower of truth inevitably encounters in a world pervaded by the spirit of pragmatism; and with a sigh for "poor human nature" we close the book.

#### CLEVER AND CYNICAL.

MISS VIOLET HUNT's novel, "The Wife of Altamont," raises several questions of interest, e.g., why the realist rarely thrives on this side of the Channel, and why, when he does get a hearing, his work is so often perfunctory. The unhappy realist, in truth, is fighting against an overpowering mental atmosphere that suffers, or, indeed, encourages him when his tone is worldly flippant, but ignores or suppresses him when his work reverses or recasts our social valuations. Imagine what Maupassant or Tchekov would have made of the situation which faces us in "The Wife of Altamont." Miss Hunt has gone to real life for the initial facts of her *cause célèbre*. Wilfred Altamont, the illegitimate son of Sir John Veere, is "a wastrel of sorts, living on his mother, and neglecting his placable wife." Unknown to his wife, Elisabeth, Wilfred has a couple of children by a mistress, Ada Cox, whom he has no money to keep, and in a desperate hour, emboldened by liquor, he tries to black-mail old Sir John, and, repulsed, shoots him dead, and then unsuccessfully tries to take his own life. Now this terrible story, psychologically, is of infinite richness. The topsail of human nature, so to say, and the *detritus* of habit, custom, and convention are blown right away by the explosive shock of the parricide, and the whole network of the roots of the involved relations of the five characters is bared. Dostoevsky has treated a somewhat similar situation in "The Brothers Karamazov," and treated it so as to inspire us with terror and pity.

But Miss Violet Hunt has not quite lifted her theme out of the atmosphere of police-court and suburban second-hand gossip. It would be more accurate to say that she has envisaged it as a squalid suburban tragedy, and then abruptly turned her back on it in order to trace the emotional fortunes of her hard, disillusioned heroine, Betsey Altamont. We have no quarrel with the character-drawing of this type, which the author understands intimately, but we do not believe that half an hour after hearing that Wilfred has "blown out his jaw and one eye," Betsey would have offered to hand over to a detective a letter establishing the motive for her husband's crime, or that when the latter is on the point of being hanged, she would say to the new friend and protector she has just picked up with, "I can't possibly feel sorry because I am going to be freed from such vermin. . . . Don't you think that if the relations of a criminal help the lawyers to trump up the plea of insanity . . . they ought to be liable to prosecution?" Miss Violet Hunt has, in fact, either been hard on Betsey or hard on herself. Let us grant that when her husband's mother, "Miss Altamont," has died of shock, Betsey motored off from the cemetery gates with the tactful stranger, Mr. Veere, the murdered man's nephew, dined at his West End club, and went out to theatres and music-halls with him during the week, and that her mind was "wholesomely occupied with the young man." Human nature is *capable de tout*, and an embittered woman, "awfully put upon—regularly bashed by Fate," in the swing of her release from a man she has grown to hate, might be brutal enough to say to Veere: "To think of Wilfred continually, alive in a sickening prison cell, the disgusting papers telling you day by day how he is in health and spirits, gloating on it, in their horrid way, and all the world expecting me to pelt off to go and kiss him through the bars! My God!" She might refuse to go near her husband, refuse to sign the petition for the commutation of the death sentence, and, in short, all her actions might be governed by her one heartfelt prayer, "Oh, if Wilfred were only dead and the earth over him!"

But, if we are to understand Betsey's cynical selfishness and angry bitterness, we must see it in proper perspective, see it as her character's limitation, see it in relation to her past sufferings and deadness of imagination, and this is where the author fails. There is no appeal from what is inside the picture to what is

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outside it. Wilfred is simply exhibited in one aspect as an incurable wastrel who has ruined Betsey's happiness, and Betsey simply as an unforgiving woman desperately anxious to forget him and enjoy herself, and there is no subtle change of feeling, mood, or recollection of the past admitted into the current of her feeling. The murderer and his victim, done cleverly in wax by Madame Tussaud, staring always in front of them, are not more immutably fixed and predisposed than are Betsey and Wilfred, and so one-sided is the representation that we cannot call this single, emphasised, snapshotted attitude true to nature. Miss Violet Hunt, in short, has too obviously a brief for cynicism, a brief for a shallow sardonicism.

There is a certain strain of grim humor in the relations of the two women—Ada and Betsey—who are both tied to the murderer, the woman who is passionately attracted to her lover, and the wife who wants to see him hanged, in order that she may marry again, and be happy, a humor which is not less palatable because the Law and Public Morality are ironically enlisted as the forces active on Betsey's side. When news comes that Altamont is to be reprieved and incarcerated for life, her generous friend, Veere, who has now become to her "the dearest boy in the world," offers to give Betsey everything a husband can bestow except the legal title of wife, but Betsey refuses, on the ground, "I am so keen now on respectability and above-boardness. . . . You'd hide me, and I want to be produced," an answer which should gratify everybody. Veere compromises by carrying off both Betsey Altamont and Ada Cox to Algernaine Keep, a medieval country house which faces his modern sham-Gothic dwelling. And here a house party gathers, and conspicuous among the guests are the Lady Dobrée de Saye, to whom Veere now becomes engaged, and Lee-Brice, the distinguished novelist, author of the banned "Red Corpuscles." The last half of the novel, which retails a great deal of epigrammatic talk, flippant analysis, and shallow fireworks of the order smart people are supposed to enjoy, traces the natural process by which Betsey, tantalised by her ambiguous position, falls genuinely in love with Veere, and softened by her passion, becomes at length fitted to make a decent mate for "the man of her heart." Altamont's suicide in prison, Veere's loss of his fortune, and his release from his engagement with the fortune-hunting Lady Dobrée, are the steps necessary before Betsey can be completely humanised. "The fortune doesn't matter. You've got your great talent and little me to help you" is Betsey's final note, as she confesses her sins.

The interest of "Altamont's Wife" to the critic lies less in its defiant analysis of a special cattish type of woman, than in the exceeding artificiality of the social code which Betsey is fighting. A Russian, an Italian, or, indeed, almost any Continental reader, might well grow bewildered in trying to understand what is the social pressure that is forcing Betsey into a cynical outpouring of all that is most despicable in her nature. Why is she so brazenly inhuman? such a reader might enquire. Why does she not have the grace to visit her husband in prison? Why do many of the other characters exhibit such vulgar flippancy, or parade their shallow heartlessness as though these were qualities to be specially proud of? To such innocent questioners the answer must be given: The novel is a parody, grim and flippant turn by turn, on the social art of keeping up appearances. We have reached a stage when, so long as the conventional screen is kept successfully in position, nobody cares much what it screens. If the screen is thrown down outrageously, as in Altamont's case, all the parties concerned become public scapegoats. But so much is the conventional screen prized, that, practically, we pay our pressmen, our novelists, and dramatists, not for telling us the truth, but for keeping the truth from us. In such an atmosphere great realism cannot thrive, for the function of the realist is to show us the real values of life in relation to its face values. Society cannot live, however, entirely on polite platitudes, ideal standards, and conventional valuations, and encourages a worldly or flippant truth-telling within limits. In "The Wife of Altamont" the hard, embittered heroine runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds. The woman wears a smile of intolerable pain; her cynicism is the price she has paid for keeping up appearances. The author, in creating Betsey's figure, has tried to

pay society back in its own coin. The littleness, the meanness, the vulgarity and shallowness of almost all the characters are the product of a life of habitual make-believe, of a perpetual dodging behind the conventional screen. The unpleasantness of the book is like the unpleasant appearance of a worn electro-plated article with patches of copper showing. It is not a work of true realism, "The Wife of Altamont," but it is very clever and it contains unpalatable truth, under the jam of amusement.

#### BOOKS IN BRIEF.

MR. BERNARD BERENSON has done well to republish, under the title of "A Sienese Painter of the Franciscan Legend" (Dent, 6s. net), the series of articles on Stefano Sassetta that made their original appearance in the "Burlington Magazine"; for he not only deals adequately with a most interesting painter of the early Renaissance, but raises the whole question of the artistic interpretation of spiritual themes. Mr. Berenson's argument, briefly put, is this: that Western art is, in general, far inferior to the Oriental in its power of interpreting and suggesting the spiritual; that of all the Italian schools, that of Siena has the most sympathy with the painting of the East; and that, therefore, it is reasonable to expect in Sassetta, one of the greatest Sienese, a capacity for mystical suggestiveness that is denied to the more material, if more technically accomplished, artists of, say, Florence. Following this line, Mr. Berenson brings Sassetta into sharp contrast with Giotto in regard to their respective renderings of the Franciscan Legend, and shows how Sassetta, the more spiritually minded of the two, succeeded in suggesting the inner meaning of the episodes of the legend, and the character of Francis's saintship, more lyrically and more convincingly than did the Florentine. It would appear from the preface that the author felt some nervousness of being misunderstood, and he is constrained to disclaim any intention of exalting Sassetta as a really greater painter than Giotto; but having committed himself to the task of proving that the Sienese was a greater interpreter of the Franciscan ideal, he fights his way to his conclusion with remorseless logic. We cannot describe how he invokes "space composition," "movement values," and other qualities of a painting that he has long since characterised so happily for us, to build up his case for Sassetta's spirituality. But we may say that in this book, as always, he shows the gift, so rare among art critics, of imparting a personal and palpable interest to an impersonal and hardly palpable discussion. One may agree or not agree with his view; in either case one is fascinated by it. The second part of the book is devoted to a close examination of Sassetta's works, and though the interest of this is necessarily narrower, the writing appeals by its distinction and charm.

\* \* \*

"JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY AND HIS FAMILY" (Lane, 16s. net), is supplementary to the "Correspondence" which was published by Mr. G. W. Curtis in 1889. Motley's daughter, Mrs. St. John Midmay, and her husband, who edit the present volume, have now printed a selection of the historian's letters not used by Mr. Curtis, together with some written by Mrs. Motley and her daughters. The most interesting of the letters are those written to Bismarck. In one of them Motley answers Bismarck's question: "If the people of the United States knew what they were fighting for in the Civil War." "We are fighting," he replies, "to preserve the existence of a magnificent commonwealth—and to annihilate the loathsome institution of negro slavery. . . . Certainly since mankind ever had a history and amused themselves with cutting each other's throats, there never, in the course of all the ages, was better cause for war than we have." Although the editors have thought it best "to omit passages containing some rather strong expressions of opinion" on the subject of the war, Motley's resentment at the attitude of our upper classes is plain enough. He speaks of "the pro-slavery slaves of journals like the London 'Times,'" but is grateful to Goldwin Smith, Mill, and John Bright—"how nobly have their voices cried in the wilder-



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\* \* \*

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CITY men resigned themselves to the inevitable and accepted with their usual grumbling equanimity the prospect of a broken week between Whitsuntide and the Royal funeral, with little or no business in the interval. The course of the money market has again been very favorable to those who live on cheap credit, credit having remained cheap to an extent and for a time which appears to be quite unwarranted by the circumstances of the case. Last Thursday's Bank return showed that the "other" deposits—which contain the balances of the joint-stock banks, and so are the index of the amount of money available in the market—at a point which used always to be taken as an indication of stringency. And yet stringency did not make its appearance. Since then the "Gazette" published on Tuesday showed that about 3½ millions have been transferred to the Treasury's account by Income-tax collections, while estate duties had contributed nearly a million, and yet stringency was almost as far off as ever. Some day a sharp jerk will show that the whole of the slack of the rope has been hauled in, but in the meantime it seems that some change in banking practice has taken place, which necessitates a modification of the influences to be drawn from the figures of the Bank return. In the meantime the optimists have postponed for a fortnight their expectations of a reduction in Bank Rate.

### THE AMERICAN OUTLOOK.

New York, as it often does when London is closed, took advantage of the Whitsuntide holiday here to indulge in a little boom on its own account, but since then has been somewhat chastened in spirit. The figures of the American trade balance are still an extraordinary phenomenon, showing a considerable margin against the United States, as compared with a huge balance in their favor, that was formerly a regular feature of their commerce. As every schoolboy knows, in these days of economic education, it is only a creditor country like England or France that can enjoy the having of what is commonly called an adverse trade balance, that is, can import more than it exports, the balance being due to it in payment for interest and services. With America the boot is on the other leg. Not only does she owe huge sums to other countries on which she has every year to remit goods to meet the interest charge, but her citizens also spend enormous amounts in travel in the Old World, the whole of which expense ought to be provided by the shipment of goods. Instead of which she is now importing more goods than she exports, and is making good the gap by selling more and more of her railroad bonds to European capitalists, and so making her position continually worse. The country has a marvellous faculty for emerging triumphantly out of difficulties, but it is almost beginning to look as if the course that it is at present steering can only end in disaster.

### CHEERFUL MARKETS.

In spite of extreme inactivity the stock markets have been, on the whole, remarkably firm. Consols crept up a little, and Home Railway stocks have shown almost blazing strength, on good holiday traffics and the news of the consummation of an agreement between the Great Western and South-Western Companies. Trunk and Mexicans are also very firm, and poor receptions given to Canadian and Japanese loans had little or no effect in checking the general cheerfulness.

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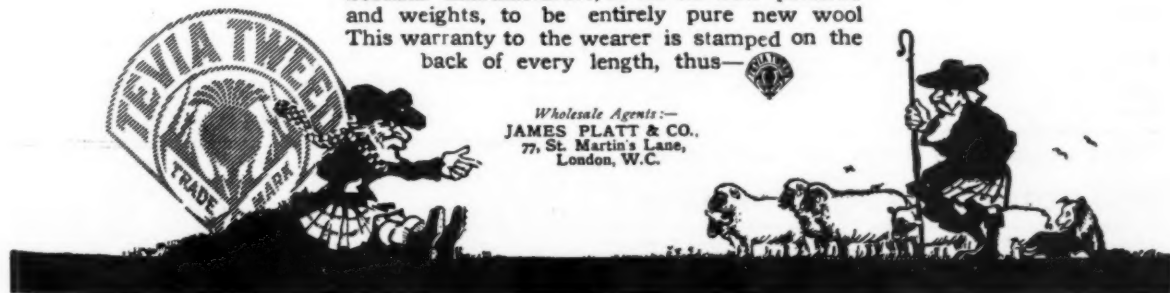
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